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ABSTRACT

The aim of the regional seminar on curriculum renewal, held in Bohinj, Slovenia in April 2002 was to contribute to human resource development and capacity-building in the field of curriculum development. It is currently widely recognized that curriculum renewal is an important component in the reform and in improving the quality of education. The exchange of information at the seminar and sharing of experiences on national processes of curriculum review and reform in participating countries was framed against an analysis of contemporary trends in curriculum development based on regional and international case studies and examples of good practice. This report is divided into six parts: (1) "The Situation of Education in South-East Europe" (Pavel Zgaga); (2) "South-East European Educational Cooperation Network" (Igor Repac); (3) "Summary Seminar Report"; (4) Plenary Sessions (Decade of Change (Slavko Gaber); Implementation of Curricula and Evaluation: Experiences from Educational Reforms in Norway (Arild Thorbjornsen); Role of Education for Social Cohesion in a Divided Society: The Case of Lebanon (Nemer Frayha)); (5) "Workshop Reports" (Designing and Approving New Curricula; Curriculum, Quality, and Evaluation; Social Studies; Mathematics; Literacy and Language Policies; Teacher Education; Minorities and the Curriculum; Early Childhood); and (6) "National Plans and Follow-Up Activities" (Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Kosovo; FYR Macedonia; Moldova; Montenegro; Romania; Serbia); and three annexes, including: Background Readings; Agenda; and List of Participants. (BT)

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DRAFTING NEW CURRICULA IN SOUTH-EAST EUROPE

FINAL REPORT OF THE REGIONAL SEMINAR
HELD IN BOHINJ, SLOVENIA, 26–28 AVRIL 2002

Edited by Saskia Rozemeijer

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SOUTH-EAST EUROPEAN EDUCATIONAL CO-OPERATION NETWORK

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Foreword

It is now widely recognized that curriculum renewal is an important component in the reform and in improving the quality of education. Indeed, the thematic reviews of education conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2000–2001) in the countries of South-East Europe, within the framework of the Stability Pact Task Force on Education and Youth, highlight the importance of curricular change in educational reforms that have been planned or are underway. Addressing issues of curricular review and reform, however, have been delayed in countries affected by armed conflict over the past decade. As a result, lack of expertise in this area now constitutes an important obstacle to educational reform in many countries of the region. In such a context, developing a common understanding of educational reform through dialogue and sharing of experience—based on both regional processes of reform, as well as on examples drawn from other regions of the world—is an important contribution to building or reinforcing the regional capacity for curriculum change.

The aim of the regional seminar on curriculum renewal, held in Bohinj, Slovenia, from 26 to 28 April 2002, was to contribute to human resource development and capacity-building in the field of curriculum development in South-East European (SEE) countries through the exchange of information and know-how on the basis of case studies in curricular review and reform. The workshop thus aimed to strengthen the South-East European Education Co-operation Network by reinforcing co-operation among experts from SEE and other countries. Participants came from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovenia. The exchange of information and sharing of experiences on national processes of curriculum review and reform in participating countries was framed against an analysis of contemporary trends in curriculum development based on regional and international case studies and examples of good practice. In this way, the regional seminar was able to identify specific needs of SEE countries in the area of curriculum renewal and to establish contacts between experts for the SEE region and beyond with a view to initiating further sustainable co-operation. Recommendations resulting from the workshop relate to co-operation in the field of curriculum design and development, the exchange of information on practices and experiences in the region, regional capacity-building activities and the need for a continuing regional networking.

The International Bureau of Education (IBE:UNESCO) would like to thank the Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS) at the University of Ljubljana, which organized the regional seminar through the South-East European Educational Co-operation Network (SEE-ECN). Our thanks go particularly to Pavel Zgaga, Director of CEPS, who was largely responsible for co-ordinating the meeting. We would also like to thank the Open Society Education Programmes–Southeast Europe for the additional support they provided.

Cecilia Braslavsky
Director
International Bureau of Education

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I. The situation of education in South-East Europe[1]

Pavel Zgaga

I. INTRODUCTION

In the autumn of 2000 and in 2001, the Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS, University of Ljubljana) was involved in the project 'Support for OECD Thematic Reviews of Educational Policy in South-Eastern Europe', on the basis of an agreement with the European Training Foundation and as part of OECD's Thematic Review of Educational Policy. The study (containing reports from eleven countries) was produced jointly by the researchers from CEPS and experts[2] from all the countries involved: Kosovo, Bosnia & Herzegovina (two reports: Federation BiH and the Srpska Republic), Albania, FYR of Macedonia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, and later also Romania, Serbia and Moldova.

Since the first thematic reviews were already in progress, there was only a limited time available for extensive methodological preparations. Bearing in mind contexts specific to the region, a questionnaire was designed (and improved during the first two months of work) and sent to country experts. The work was carried out mostly by means of virtual communication, and the research group at CEPS was in permanent contact with the country experts. As each report was finished, it was immediately forwarded to the OECD thematic review teams (in principle, before the team visited that country). CEPS also provided additional support to review teams during their site visits and subsequently during the drafting of reports, mostly by searching for additional data and information or rechecking them. As each country report was finished, they were included on the *South-East European Education Co-operation Network* webpage (www.see-educoop.net). At the end of the work, reports were checked once again for accuracy.

The research group encountered several difficulties in the process of obtaining data and in subsequently analysing them. Many data were not available for various reasons; most often being due to the transitional nature of societies. In some countries of the region, particularly in those affected by wars, the ruined institutional frameworks or absence of such networks were the main obstacles. Changes in population structure and huge migrations, combined with destroyed archives, sometimes made aspects of the research impossible to carry out. For the purposes of studying political and social changes, long-scale comparability of data (e.g. 2000 versus 1991) is at least questionable in some cases. The former political and/or ideological barriers to monitoring should also be taken into account when considering the context of such a monitoring study.

In general, throughout the region human resources in this field are scarce and unsatisfactory and, in most cases, no appropriate training has been provided for a considerable period of time. Methodology and terminology also caused several problems; e.g. criteria have changed a great deal since 1990 and today there is an obvious need for harmonization in this field. European Training Foundation National Observatories are helpful in most countries from this point of view. However, they do not cover all parts of the educational pyramid (e.g. early childhood, general education, partly higher education). Considering the experience gained in the framework of this study, we strongly recommend a support programme for developing the monitoring capacity in all countries of the region. Such a support programme would be more effective if it is linked with governmental institutions (e.g. offices of statistics) or with those NGOs that have already launched important national projects in this direction.

II. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In general, at the end of the 1980s the educational level in most countries of the region had been quite advanced. Therefore, problems that appeared during the turbulent transitional period should be considered from this particular perspective—as a regression. The fact that a relatively efficient education system existed also defines an approach to today's problems. These are by no means countries without educational structures and expertise; nevertheless, they are faced with serious problems and huge challenges in the present transitional period and therefore need support.

There is another characteristic that should be taken very seriously into consideration when approaching the region and its problems (not only educational ones)—*diversity*. This applies not only to languages, religion, and ethnicity; it has been, moreover, present throughout history. Already a long time ago, this region witnessed

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the split between the Eastern and the Western Roman Empire; this has always been an area where different empires met, e.g. the Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman. It has been a region of divisions and unifications. Yet, it has always been very diverse. The perception of the region during the second half of the twentieth century as a homogenous unit, in a political or ideological sense, can hardly be anything else but a misunderstanding based on ignorance. During the last half of the twentieth century, all the main global divisions reappeared in the former Balkans again. The former Yugoslavia, as a 'neither an eastern nor a western' country, was highly decentralized and diverse in itself. At least since the mid-1960s it was has been more connected with the West (with 1 million workers migrating there) than with the East. Albania, to the south-west of the peninsula, was a totally isolated area until the late 1980s, while Bulgaria and Romania belonged to the 'Eastern bloc' and Moldova was an integral part of the former USSR. To the south of the Balkans, Greece was also a frontier to the West in the political sense of the word. It would not be easy to find similar diversity anywhere else on Earth in such a limited area.

Therefore—and particularly if we wish to define clear future orientations and feasible tasks—it is necessary to start with recognizing the fact that there are particular situations in every individual country of the region. It is not possible to achieve simple common solutions, at least not when we discuss details rather than general philosophical issues. Even if experts or politicians agree on certain general features or principles, it is still necessary to understand and implement them in the particular context of a particular country. Ignorance of this fact has been at the origin of many problems in the region, including economic disasters and wars. However, its recognition can provide a solid ground not only for national recovery, but also for renewed regional co-operation and progress in the countries of the region.

After the Second World War, drastic changes in education systems were introduced in all countries of the region. The most common features were the elimination of illiteracy and reforms moving from four to eight years of basic education. It is an undeniable fact that these systems were highly ideological in nature, of which at least three distinctive types could be observed: the Albanian, the Soviet and the Yugoslavian. The education systems developed in parallel to oscillations in political and economic power. There was a rapid development of four-year technical schools, while vocational education and training was linked to the socialist industrial complex organized in a different way in each 'bloc'.

In the former Yugoslavia, the 1980s were marked by an educational reform of a specific type, traces of which are still visible today. The so-called 'career oriented education' from the turn of the 1970s into the 1980s faced a double task: to answer the political challenges made by liberal and civil society movements (like the students' movements) of the 1970s, and at the same time to adjust education to the 'needs of society' (that is, modernization). This modernization was understood in the context of socialism 'with a human face' and within the framework of specific terminology: pluralism of interests, self-government, socialist market economy, etc. However, this discussion continued beyond the inherent tensions and conflicts that characterized all of the post-war period. As the ideological dimension was also part of the reform—as an answer to intellectual opposition at universities and in civil society—it was only a question of time before open criticisms would erupt. It happened during the process of drafting a new common core curriculum. In a multi-ethnic society, the centralist powers demanded stronger 'harmonization' of mother-tongue, literature, history, etc., across the entire federation; a demand that provoked fierce opposition. At least in Slovenia, this was an important catalyst for the revival of civil society and gradual democratization leading towards the independence of that country.

Reform in the early 1980s introduced a system of eight-year basic education followed by 'career-oriented education': a vertical stream composed of a variety of programmes leading up to higher education. Higher education was not regulated as a special sub-system any more; universities were broken down into numerous highly independent faculties. The basic idea of the reform was 'to link a school and a factory', to adjust education to self-governmental interests and to a socialist market economy. It was also based on the belief that further development of the economy and society could be predicted with certainty and that enrolment into upper secondary and tertiary education could be rationally planned. In fact, school networks and the development of curricula were conditioned by political power games and the wishes of predominantly local authorities. As a result, this educational reform led to the supply of inadequate human resources and even a stagnation of the educational structure of the population. General education was disregarded, the traditional *gimnazija* (grammar school) was abolished and university autonomy declined.

The turn from the 1980s to the 1990s should have been a time of 're-reforming' in the former Yugoslavia, considering that no profound political changes or conflicts had been anticipated. Unfortunately, they did occur. In some places they occurred in the most terrible ways, which brought a stop to any form of educational improvement for a long time. Problems arising in the education system today can sometimes be attributed to the fact that it had not been possible to reform the system at an earlier time.

III. MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The data gathered for each country report were structured into seven clusters, as follows: general data; participation in education; enrolment patterns and the numbers of institutions; curriculum; administration in primary and secondary education; facilities and equipment; and,

finally, costs and financing. Accordingly, the main findings of the study are presented below following that same structure.

1. General data

Data from all countries show changes in population. Particularly, there were huge migrations during the 1990s. In general, they were due to economic reasons. However, in some countries they were the tragic result of wars and ethnic conflicts. Flows of refugees during the periods of conflict established parallel or temporary—mostly improvised—school networks. Yet, many children also went through a certain period of time without any systematic education. Migrations in the region sometimes reached such huge proportions that the traditional school networks could no longer cope with basic educational needs. It still remains a task for national statistical offices to throw light on these movements and to make population trends and structures more transparent and reliable.

Another common feature is a prevailing *mixed ethnic composition* in the countries of the region. Ethnic minorities are also an important issue in education. The ethnic composition of populations varies from country to country: the actual majority of the main ethnic group in individual countries also varies, e.g. from Montenegro with 62%, to Moldova with 64%, to Albania with nearly 98%. It is obvious that each of the countries has to deal with ethnic issues. However, it is not easy to get a clear statistical picture today. In Bulgaria, the new Statistical Law does not allow the gathering of data according to ethnic origin. Moreover, in the Republic of Srpska, it was not possible to gather this data at all. It should not be forgotten that this issue is still a very sensitive one. Even from a technical point of view, the methodology of data collection should be improved. Therefore, the data presented in the study should be treated with reserve.

As in other parts of the world, these countries are experiencing *a declining birth rate*. Actually, in this aspect there are huge differences in the region. While Croatia, for example, encounters one of the *lowest* birth rates (9.9 births per 1,000 women in 1999), Kosovo (21.3 in 1995), and Albania (17.2 in 1989), are amongst countries with the *highest* birth rates in Europe.

The data also exhibit a predominantly *low level of educational attainment* for the (active) population, particularly among the middle and older generations. In some parts that were affected by conflicts during the last decade this could also concern young people. In this regard, some social groups have been particularly marginalized: mostly women, some ethnic groups (e.g. Roma), and older people. Unfortunately, with some exceptions, effective counter-measures applied to the labour market are either inadequate or absent. At the same time, the unemployment rate is increasing. This is occurring particularly among young people and among those with incomplete education or only with primary education, and also affecting some with secondary education (inappropriate qualifications). The structure of employment by economic sectors has changed a great deal in the last ten years and will change further in the future. This will most likely provoke further instability in the unemployment rate, particularly if educational structures do not change. Therefore, all these trends should be carefully considered in future processes to develop educational policies.

2. Participation in education

In most countries, the structures of today's education systems have been more or less inherited from the past. During the 1990s, there were systemic changes, for example in Romania, but most countries have been planning broader and more carefully considered reforms in only the last year or two. The existing education systems and patterns obstruct further access to education and improved participation in education at various levels. Today, only Romania and Moldova have nine years of compulsory schooling; all the other countries remain with the traditional eight years—although they have changes planned. The average number of years of schooling is low (usually not exceeding eight years; it is below average in Bulgaria and Moldova; some countries even reported that these data could not be gathered).

Participation in pre-school education is low and is particularly alarming in the Western Balkans (Romania and Bulgaria come up with better results). In the Western Balkans, Croatia and Albania with approximately 35% of children included in pre-school education report the best participation, while Kosovo, with (an estimated) 3%, reports the worst situation in the region. It seems that the predominant form of pre-school education is a traditional one. During the transitional period, the costs of pre-school education fell progressively on parents; this probably explains the decrease in participation.

At the level of *basic education*, all countries report *high participation* (but they mention some problems of methodology in data collection). It should be borne in mind that participation in basic education has traditionally been high in these countries and it seems that, despite the conflicts and huge migrations in some parts of the region, all countries succeeded in preserving the basic obligatory educational network. It is difficult to reach conclusions on the basis of the collected data, but problems may arise in participation in rural areas (Roma children, girls). In general, countries do not report alarming levels of dropout from basic education. However, the quality of education could be questionable (particularly in remote regions) since no appropriate mechanisms of quality assessment have been implemented. Assessment could be a problem in general; some figures give results that are simply too good. In absolute figures, participation in basic education is decreasing as a consequence of population decrease (with the exception of Albania and Kosovo). This trend is important for school network

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planning and particularly for the adoption of teacher-training measures.

Countries report *increasing participation in upper secondary education*. However, particularly in the Western Balkans, the situation is not comparable with other countries in a period of transition. Considerable parts of the population finishing eight years of basic education do not continue in upper secondary education. Serbia reports the highest proportion of an age cohort continuing with upper secondary education (78.3%; over three times more in vocational education than in general education—a consequence of 'career oriented education' during the 1980s?), followed by Romania (69.4%), Bulgaria (67%), FYR Macedonia (65%), and Croatia (63%). There are no such data available for Montenegro, but estimations put it in this same category. Bosnia and Herzegovina reports that more than one-half of the age cohort is enrolled in upper secondary education (56.67%). There are no data for the Republic of Srpska, but the proportion could well be lower. Data are not available for Kosovo either; however, according to a rough estimation, its proportion would be close to that of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Albania (41%), and Moldova (39%; almost all in general education, only 9% in vocational!), are at the bottom of this scale. When examining *school leavers* (graduates), no extensive changes were introduced during the last decade. Between 1991 and 1999 (2000) at the level of ISCED- 3,[1] an increase of one-fifth is the highest (Serbia, 120%; Croatia, 113%; Montenegro, 108%), while some countries registered a decline in school leavers (FYR Macedonia, 97%; Bulgaria, 88%).

It is typical of most countries that the proportion of students in *general education is low*, but *higher in vocational education and training* (Moldova, which was once part of the former Soviet education system is an exception). It is necessary to point out once again that in countries of the former Yugoslavia that have not so far changed their education systems, this should be considered within the context of the so-called 'career oriented education' of the 1980s. Upper secondary general education (*gimnazija*) was abolished at the beginning of the 1980s (all upper secondary education then became 'vocationally oriented') and it was partly reconstructed only at the beginning of the 1990s. Meanwhile vocational education and training still consists mostly of study programmes rooted in the 1980s.

In general, the proportion of *female students* to *male students* is quite balanced. There are no data on participation by gender available for Kosovo, but the number of female students is probably lower there than in other countries. The Kosovo report only refers to a greater number of the female students dropping out of secondary education. *Overall drop-out rates* seems to be a serious problem. All country experts reported that a systematic measurement of dropouts from basic and upper secondary education was in most cases non-existent. Therefore, the methodology of calculating dropout was simply based on the number of students who did not complete the school year in relation to the total number of students. There has also been no systematic resistance to prevent dropout; in this respect the traditional attitude that 'it's normal to drop out' or 'she/he is not smart enough' is probably very much in evidence. On the other hand, some official figures, as we have already mentioned, show very good results (average grades), particularly in basic education. It is clear that *assessment* should represent an important issue in the process of reforming education systems.

There are similar trends in *tertiary education*. All countries report *rapidly increasing participation* in this area as well. At the turn of millennium, 35% of the age cohort (age 19–24) were students in Bulgaria; 31.3% (age 20–24) in Croatia; 29% (age 19–22) in Moldova; 28% (age 19–23) in Romania; 22.6% (age 18–24) in Serbia; 21.6% (age 19–25) in Bosnia and Herzegovina; 21.5% (age 19–23) in FYR Macedonia; and 15% (age 18–23) in Albania. For some countries the corresponding data are not available. When the *number of graduates* is examined, there were no evident positive changes during the last decade. Between 1991 and 1999 (2000) at the level of ISCED-5, the highest growth was registered in Romania, followed by Croatia. Croatia also registered the highest proportion of graduates in relation to graduates at ISCED-3 level, while Bulgaria registered a small decrease in the number of graduates:

- Romania, 213% (24% of graduates at ISCED-3);
- Montenegro, 170% (but only 9% of graduates at ISCED-3; in absolute figure: 649 graduates);
- Croatia, 143% (26% of graduates at ISCED-3);
- Macedonia, 110% (18% of graduates at ISCED-3);
- Serbia, 103% (19% of graduates at ISCED-3);
- Bulgaria, 91% (43% of graduates at ISCED- 3).

3. Enrolment patterns and the number of institutions

The third chapter of the questionnaire dealt with more detailed issues of enrolment and institutions, which we have briefly introduced above. They draw attention to some details of the school network and similar issues linked with the ones already described.

School network; number of institutions. Traditionally, school networks have been well developed in the countries of the region. There is no evidence of any radical closing of institutions, although some countries obviously encounter severe problems with extremely low enrolment in rural areas and in some types of institutions. The size of institutions differs greatly: there are many institutions with fifty pupils or less, while at the other extreme—particularly in urban centres—huge institutions are still encountered. An average pupil/teacher ratio in most cases does not seem to be very problematic: in kindergartens it differs from 7.76:1 (the Republic of Srpska) to 20.73 (Montenegro); in primary schools from

12 (Bulgaria) to 21 (Bosnia and Herzegovina); in general secondary schools from 11.0/11.8 (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia) to 19 (Kosovo; Serbian schools excluded); in vocational education and training schools from 6.5 (Moldova) to 21 (Bosnia and Herzegovina); at universities from 10 (Bulgaria) to 20 (Kosovo) and in non-university higher education institutions from 8.0/8.8 (Bulgaria, Moldova) to 68.0/32.18 (Romania, Serbia). However, this is an average situation only. In some cases institutions encounter difficult problems at both extremes. Vocational education and training schools and non-university institutions display the highest extremes within the region. The situation calls for the reconsideration of both public as well as private school networks.

In most countries the sub-system of *private kindergartens and schools* is not well developed. In some countries, there are no such institutions in pre-school and basic education (Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro); in other countries, there are only a few (Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Srpska, Kosovo). If there are private institutions, then by law they are not supported by the national budget. The category of private institutions mainly consists of private kindergartens (124 in Croatia, 70 in Romania, 41 in Moldova, 28 in Albania, 18 in Bulgaria), but also primary schools (28 in Albania, 25 in Bulgaria, 24 in Moldova, 6 in Croatia), and schools of general upper secondary education (56 in Bulgaria, 30 in Romania, 26 in Croatia, 21 in Moldova, 18 in Albania). Institutions of higher education are also involved. Private initiatives in vocational education and training are almost totally absent in the Western Balkans (there are 35 such schools in Bulgaria, 22 in Romania, 3 in Moldova). It is difficult to answer what really initiates schemes for the establishment of private institutions. These institutions could to a certain extent be an alternative to existing public education (due to its problems and limitations), partly they could also be an answer to insufficient public financing of education. In some countries private kindergartens and schools (not in vocational education and training) are primarily confessional.

Adult education remains unrecognized in all countries of the region! The former system of adult education has mainly collapsed and, in most cases, no new development is foreseen. This part of the education system is overshadowed by familiar problems occurring within the field of the education of young people; nonetheless, it should be placed on the agenda and should by no means be forgotten. Since there is no relevant monitoring of this sub-system, there is a desperate lack of data, which makes a detailed and correct diagnosis presently impossible. Countries usually report some weak structures or public institutions. Private institutions have been established in most countries. Yet, in general they are neither a part of the public system of education, nor are they well regulated or supported from the budget either. As the educational structure of populations aged over 30 is poor and numerous employment problems are experienced, *adult education should be recognized everywhere among the main national priorities*. Special attention should be paid to programmes of (re)training and to the philosophy of promoting lifelong learning.

4. The curriculum

In only a few countries—by law since the late 1990s—have new curricula been approved and implemented in basic education, general secondary education, and, for at least some professions, in vocational education and training (Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania). Parallel to this, teachers have received new training, but in most cases their training seems to have been insufficient, sometimes lacking appropriate new instructional materials. In other countries, there were only slight changes in the curriculum during the last decade.

For the countries of the Western Balkans, *a comprehensive curricular reform* should be a top priority.

5. Administration in primary and secondary education

From the point of view of human resource development, *school administration* is disregarded. There is almost no systematic training for school principals. In general, teacher training remains a traditional, under-esteemed activity. Due to circumstances, teachers regressed in a professional sense during the recent crises and they need more support today. In-service teacher training is mostly insufficient (almost absent in some countries), while pre-service training needs modernization. A particularly modernized institutional basis is required that could provide graduates with better pedagogical competences. This is particularly important for (future) teachers in vocational education and training.

Qualifications of educators and teachers. In most cases there are no data available on the qualifications of teachers and educators. Taking into account the absence of these data, it seems that regulations on teacher qualifications are vague—neither comparable nor very reliable. In those countries in which data reports are available (one half of the countries!), under- or unqualified teachers and educators can be found mostly in pre-school education (30% in Macedonia, 21% in Romania and Croatia) and basic education (19% in Romania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 13.5% in Kosovo). The ratio of under- or unqualified teachers is surprisingly high in vocational education and training schools in Moldova (46%) and Romania (13%), as well as in non-university higher education institutions in Romania (33%). Once again, these data are not very reliable. It is necessary to *reconsider the system of teachers' and educators' qualifications*.

6. Facilities and equipment

Taking into account the economic and political circumstances of the 1990s, it is not surprising that all countries report *severe problems with facilities and equipment*. The

situation is most severe in the countries affected by wars, particularly in Kosovo. The restoration of the educational facilities is an extremely difficult project for these countries, which could be launched only with the *help of international organizations*. Country reports show that in most countries there is a *lack of data* on facilities and equipment. Therefore, endeavours to get a clear and fair presentation of the most necessary interventions should be supported. Severe problems in restoration of the educational facilities and modernization of the equipment should be linked with the development of a comprehensive educational policy (particularly concerning school networks).

7. Costs and financing

This was the *most difficult part of the study*. Data on educational costs and financing are largely absent and the research team had to pay particular attention to collecting data and analysing them. In almost every country it was necessary to resort to different methodologies. There are several technical reasons for the lack of data, mostly attributable to the transitional nature of societies: frequent changes of legislation; inflation; absence of monitoring, etc. In Kosovo, so far no country budget has existed, thus education has been financed from the so-called 'consolidated budget', which mainly originated from international sources. Pre-school education is self-financed in most cases.

In general, *public financing of education* is rather poor: *on average it forms 3 to 4% of gross domestic product*, sometimes even below 3%. Foreign aid is rarely sufficiently organized, nor properly co-ordinated, and it is not always aimed at sustainability. In the overall budget, nearly all the resources available are allocated to salaries (almost all in pre-university education in Romania, 90% or more in Croatia, Montenegro and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina). Funds for school equipment (2% or even less in Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro and Romania) and investments (3% or even less in Montenegro, Macedonia, the Republic of Srpska, Romania and Serbia) are very weak. There are no realistic possibilities for *educational development* in the framework of a national budget of this type; *international support* should be considered in this connection. Once again, it was impossible to get comparable data from all the countries. In some countries, a slightly better structure of the budget (lower share for salaries, higher share for investments and equipment) is observable in higher education (Romania, Montenegro and Croatia).

IV. SOME RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

As can be seen from this study—as well as from reviews and reports collected in the framework of the South-East Europe Educational Co-operation Network—there are more or less clear findings on future orientations and the immediate goals for *improving particular parts of the educational pyramid*. I will presently only try to summarize some of the most evident findings and recommendations.

In general, countries of the region have encountered a decrease or, at the very least, a stagnation of the proportion of children included in *pre-primary education*. The economic situation is to be viewed as the main reason for the present situation. Yet, the cultural aspect should also be considered. Even if an improvement could be expected in parallel with economic growth, this statement could still not be a reasonable position for *educational policy* in the present circumstances. Pre-primary education should have a greater place in educational policy today. Merely waiting for an economic boom would only result in inactivity for a further period of time. Moreover, pre-primary education is closely linked with some other policy areas, for example, demography, social and gender issues, family, etc., that do not allow for apathy.

Elementary education is probably that part of the educational pyramid to which most attention is being paid on a national level, but, it is also the area that has to cope with the most severe problems. The problems are immense: the majority of public funds are allocated to elementary education, yet the lack of sufficient funding usually affects this part of the system most. We should leave out (but not forget!) serious problems of structures and equipment in order to stress the renewal of curricula and the implementation of new teaching and learning methods that also seem to be closely linked to future regional co-operation in education. All countries of the region have reached a level where *compulsory* elementary education is no longer the priority issue, but *quality* elementary education *for all* is the real task that every country must aim for. Differentiation at school, individualization of compulsory pedagogical educational standards, improvement of monitoring and assessment, optional subjects, decentralization of curricula, etc.—all these issues together with particular aspects of the education of marginal groups, minorities and children with special needs, etc., should receive more systemic support in the future. More *developmental projects* should be launched in this area and their better implementation should be sought. On the content level, a need to continue with well-rooted projects in developing civic education, improving history teaching, language learning, etc., (not only in basic education) is still prevalent and needs solid follow-up.

Most of what has just been said holds true also in the case of *upper secondary education*. However, general upper secondary education today seems to occupy a better position than vocational education and training in most countries of the region. The reasons can once again be attributed to the economic situation and transition processes in society. However, as in the case of pre-primary education mentioned above, passive waiting for an economic boom would not make a firm base for educa-

tional policy. Ten (or even more) consecutive age cohorts without the possibility of systematic *vocational education and training* are not only problematic and expensive from the point of view of the national economy and the labour market; they are also very problematic—and expensive—from the point of view of the expected consolidated structure of upper secondary education. *General secondary education schools* (gymnasiums, lyceums, etc.) have to deal with a situation that is quite different from that of some other countries: they not only offer general education, but in many cases they also substitute for the lack of vocational schools. This problem is reflected in questions of access, equity, etc., but also in the transfer to tertiary education.

In some countries of the region the term *tertiary education* calls for earnest discussion. A traditional model of university education is still predominantly in force and the existing universities—confronted with many problems that cannot be discussed in detail here—have to cope with situations similar to that of some gymnasiums or lyceums. However, they must do so at a 'higher level' because they have to resist the pressure of young unemployed people. Unfortunately, this leads to questions of access, equity, quality, etc., being overlooked. In order to provide greater access, to ensure the quality of university study, to strengthen links with industry and promote employment—but also to influence processes at lower educational levels—attempts to develop diversified systems of tertiary education, which are in progress in some countries, could indicate effective steps forward. These steps could also be strengthened by means of regional and international co-operation.

Finally, let us not forget that *adult education* is a problem *per se*. In a situation where the key effort of national education policy is to introduce endeavours to stop negative processes and to guarantee quality education for all young people who will sooner or later have to cope with economic and political reality, the education of adults seems to be marginalized. The problem is particularly dramatic: during the last decade the accelerating rate of unemployment was a main characteristic of the region, while the structure of industry today is totally different from the past, and new skills are demanded by the labour market. *The age cohort between 35 and 50 years is probably most affected* by the lack of educational and training opportunities. In addition, public funds have mostly been abolished from this area of education, while most of the new (re)privatized companies have not so far developed any interest in financial support for this form of education and training. Endeavours that aim at promoting lifelong learning strategies usually meet insurmountable obstacles at this precise point. However, this could again be an important point on the agenda for regional co-operation and international assistance.

Because of the internal limitations of this report and following the above comments about different parts of the educational pyramid, we may make only a few additional remarks about *teachers' education and training*: it needs radical modernization in both its pre-service as well as its in-service forms. The entire region needs modern institutions in this area, not only: (1) as a place of quality teachers' education and training; but also (2) as a place of substantive educational research, particularly in policy studies, as well as in pedagogical methods and didactics that should abandon their traditional and outmoded forms; and (3) as a place of support for further educational renewal and curricular development in each country. Since teacher education and training is traditionally understood as primarily concerning basic education or general education, the importance of the pedagogical competences of teachers in vocational education and training schools and adult learning should be emphasized. Neither should this issue be neglected in pre-primary education.

Following this point can help us draw a conclusion. Countries of the region—facing so many serious challenges to their education systems—have received significant expert help from the international community over recent years. They achieved evident successes, but their needs are still immense. Efficiently meeting these needs by all available means demands *sustainable resources and expertise*.

As various forms of help from the international community have been extremely valuable and most timely for countries of the region, an intrinsic imbalance has often been present within those countries. Sometimes this was due to the lack of understanding of particular situations in each country of the region. It has also been the result of separate bilateral co-operation schemes with individual countries without any appropriate international co-ordination. What does this mean? There were certain projects aimed at helping all countries in implementing educational innovations (e.g. 'Step by Step'), and taking into account the *particular situation of a particular country*. There were also bilateral (or even unilateral) projects—no doubt a sincere expression of solidarity—that sometimes produced structures that only deepened the existing disparities within the region. We should not forget that *accession to Europe* means also *compatibility within the region*. First of all, it is the region that is predominant.

Today it is widely accepted that a region, any region, needs a certain internal compatibility, certain similar structures of its system in order to strengthen mutual co-operation, to enhance exchanges, etc. The troubles just mentioned mostly result from decreasing or hindered regional co-operation in the past (for reasons we cannot elaborate on here) and an increasing bilateral co-operation with sometimes 'very distant' countries. These troubles can be avoided and the added value of bilateral co-operation can be strengthened if reasonable co-operation and co-ordination is promoted *inside the region* and strengthened within the frame of greater international co-operation.

Last but not least; in order to strengthen national educational reforms, it is necessary to *improve the image of*

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education in societies of the region. It was obvious from this study that the overall position of education in societies of the region is still weak. The share of GDP spent on education is lower everywhere —sometimes critically lower—than is recommended by international organizations. As a consequence, the social status of teachers is rather weak, their working conditions are poor, and their readiness to engage in educational renewal is undermined. Of course, in such a situation, a Minister's first priority is to guarantee that the system works smoothly; for her or him it is extremely difficult to launch renewal projects. In such conditions, international expert co-operation is helpful and worthy, but one should not forget that national budgetary problems have still to be overcome.

An important point that can help strengthen the general position of education in society is presented through *public values* and *public opinion*. Renewal of (national) education is always linked with a change of public values and public opinion. Democratic and open societies are based upon individuals, who should be able to address their everyday problems and to co-operate with others on the basis of equal rights, solidarity, and similar values. To live in a democratic society, to play an individual part in the economy and political life, to make an individual contribution to the values of an open society—all these aims are based on *quality education for all*. These aims can be seriously obstructed if public opinion associates education with ruined schools lacking basic equipment, low paid and poorly trained teachers, and outmoded curricula. However, these aims can also be fostered if the key national priority is given (also) to education and if certain school improvements are quickly approved by society. It is obvious that this is the very point in which a country could easily fall into *circulus vitiosus*—a vicious circle. The worst thing is when public opinion loses any trust and turns away from education as an opportunity for an individual (*carpe diem!*) and substitutes it with day-to-day survival. This is the most expensive scenario from the point of view of the country as a whole, not only in terms of its (educational) budget.

Therefore, at the end of this report a plea should be made for a national, regional and international *campaign intended to improve the position and the esteem of education in societies of the region*. Various activities could be launched: public appearances—regionally and internationally—by distinguished personalities, which would draw attention to education as a tool of individual promotion and national prosperity, and also draw attention to successful economic—or cultural—activities based on new knowledge and skills, etc.

The foreseen peer reviews in the countries of the region seem to recognize some important potential in this direction too.

NOTES

1. Based on the final content report on the project: *Support for OECD thematics review of educational policy in South-Eastern Europe*, OECD, 2002. (Ref. CCNM/DEELSA/ED(2001)1).
2. The researchers in these countries were: Dr. Dukagjin Pupovci (Kosovo); Suada Numić (BiH—Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina); Aleksandra Gaković (BiH—the Republic of Srpska); Pavli Kisi (Albania); Blagica Novkovska (FYR of Macedonia); Iskra Petrova (Bulgaria); Mag. Senka Bosner (Croatia); Nataša Živković (Montenegro); Liliana Preoteasa (Romania); Gordana Zindović Vukadinović (Serbia) ; and Dr. Anatol Gremalschi (Moldova). See: **http://ceps.pef.uni-lj.si/** for details.
3. The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED): http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/doc/isced_1997.htm

II. The South-East European Educational Co-operation Network[1]

Igor Repac

I. BACKGROUND

While countries and education systems in the region vary greatly, they share the common challenge of having to respond quickly and in a flexible manner to fundamental democratic, economic and social transition processes within difficult financial and political constraints. Changing labour markets, emerging civil society, and reconciliation processes require new skills, competencies, knowledge and values in a lifelong learning perspective. At the same time, the management of change in education and training systems faces severe challenges. These challenges include a deteriorating 'material base' (infrastructure, decreasing real incomes of teachers and administrators); demographic changes (migration from rural to urban areas, internal displacement, refugees/returnees, brain drain); unsteady legal and political frameworks; weak institutional capacity to support decentralization and the introduction of new management; outmoded teaching and learning styles; etc.

Over the last decade of transition, the countries in the region have developed a variety of approaches to tackle these problems. The potential to learn from good practices within the region, as well as from mistakes made, would enhance ongoing and future reform processes and optimize the use of investments made so far. Regional co-operation is the necessary tool to use this pool of accumulated expertise. It was acknowledged that, apart from the international community and the national governments, civil society actors (e.g. NGOs) are also playing an increasingly important role.

After a decade of upheavals—crises and wars in the Balkans—the idea of the network grew out of a concern that more remains to be rebuilt in the region than its physical infrastructure. The need to ensure the establishment of good neighbourly relations, the readiness of different ethnic groups to live together, and the ability of all to cope with profound changes were all considered more important. It was believed that education would contribute substantially to the creation of a stable and prosperous civil society and to sustainable economic development.

II. CREATING THE NETWORK

One of the first initiatives in the direction of a regional co-operation effort was the creation of a virtual platform of communication: a South-East Europe (SEE) website was set up by KulturKontakt Austria, an organization supported by and acting on behalf of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. It offered news and background information on the Enhanced Graz Process, a data base comprising more than 400 educational projects, a newsletter with information on forthcoming conferences and meetings, ongoing programmes and other news from the world of education. It is in this perspective that a feasibility study for a 'Southeast European Educational Co-operation Centre' was carried out by the European Commission. The Centre was to be a focal point for information exchange, co-ordination and networking between existing regional initiatives and other European partners, as well as for inter-institutional educational co-operation. It was determined that innovative pilot projects should give quick and flexible impulses and provide experience for systemic reform.

The South-East European Educational Co-operation Network (SEE-ECN) was developed as a part of the Enhanced Graz Process, initiated by Austria, in order to promote democratic and peaceful development in the region by supporting and co-ordinating educational co-operation projects.

In February 2001, in co-operation with the Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS) of the University of Ljubljana, the SEE website was incorporated into the South-East European Educational Co-operation Network. CEPS was chosen to implement the project, as it was already working with a network that facilitated access to information on education in the region and operated in regional languages.

The SEE website thus became the SEE-ECN web site and has been jointly managed by Kulturkontakt and CEPS ever since. Kulturkontakt has contributed to the project by providing a co-operation platform (a web editor and running costs) for the website; while CEPS has provided the necessary office space and training. The framework of co-operation consists of a clear distribution of tasks at the organizational and content levels. Kulturkontakt continues to manage part of the homepage, while CEPS introduces novelties.

The objectives of the new website were:

- to create a databank and information pool in order to facilitate the flow of information on development of

education, and of educational systems in the region;
- to support and democratize the debate on expertise and analyses;
- to increase local ownership and commitment;
- and to facilitate the dissemination of information.

III. VISIONS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES

The long-term objective of the network is the incorporation of South-Eastern Europe into a 'European Area of Education', based upon the willingness of all the parties involved to pro-actively promote this process. Attaining this objective requires long-term programmes as well as short-term initiatives and bridging measures. The first steps to be taken were identified as follows:
- the creation of structures for a constant flow of information;
- the use of existing regional expertise in order to encourage regional ownership and initiative;
- networking and co-operation across all institutional, cultural and national borders.

From the very beginning, the SEE-ECN has been conceived as a project in progress. In its *Phase I*, the main goal was to establish a virtual network in order to support and enhance existing activities, to make relevant documents accessible in regional languages free of charge, and to animate debate on educational reforms in the region. In *Phase II*, the SEE-ECN was to work on strengthening contacts among educational institutions and experts through electronic communication.

With time, the network has been improved in order to:
- broaden public debate on reform goals and methods;
- increase the level of expert involvement in discussing the findings of international reviews;
- bring together key contact points in the education systems of the Stability Pact countries on a regular basis;
- operate in the local languages of the region.

Donors that enabled the establishment of the SEE-ECN and still support its efforts are:
- Open Society Institute, Budapest.
- Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BMAA).
- Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (BMBWK).
- University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education.
- United States Embassy, Ljubljana.
- Tandar, Ljubljana.

IV. THE STRUCTURE OF THE NETWORK

The network is overseen by a Governing Board and a Steering Committee. The Governing Board was established by the Task Force Education and Youth (Stability Pact for South East Europe). Its mission is to oversee the implementation of the SEE-ECN strategy, guidelines and funds managed by CEPS, and to discuss the development of the network. The Steering Committee is responsible for the overall monitoring of the project implementation and for endorsing any changes to the framework outlined by the project proposal. It consists of one representative of each donor institution, the implementing partners (CEPS, KulturKontakt), and the Governing Board. The Governing Board and the Steering Committee inform each other on their activities, findings and proposals on a regular basis.

V. LAUNCHING THE NETWORK

When the Governing Board adopted the Initial Charter (November 2001), the Task Force on Education and Youth, CEPS and KulturKontakt informed international partners of the aims of the network in a jointly signed letter and invited some institutions from SEE countries and international organizsations to join the network. The initial members were:
- SEE ministries responsible for education, labour, employment and social affairs.
- SEE leading public institutions responsible for educational studies and research (educational institutes or institutes of employment, universities and particularly higher education institutions dealing with educational policy and teacher education).
- Leading non-governmental organizations in education in the SEE region.
- International organizations (OECD, World Bank, UNESCO and its national commissions in the region, UNDP, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, EURYDICE, ETF and its national observatories, regional OSI, etc.).

The network set up an interim structure by drawing together and building upon existing institutions that would foster information exchange, co-ordination and co-operation needs across the region on a permanent basis. This structure was set up in a way that would allow an easy shift or transfer into a more permanent structure.

VI. SEE-ECN COUNTRY NODES

In order to strengthen the network and to decentralize efforts, the Governing Board established 'SEE regional nodes' in all countries. These nodes were to collect documents in their respective countries, to assist in organizing translations and to contribute to the general development of the network.

CEPS invited all SEE-ECN members to suggest potential SEE country nodes among institutions (NGOs, governmental institutions, educational institutions, etc.) registered and operating in their respective countries. On the basis of the applications, the Governing Board made the final decision and an operative plan was prepared. In June 2001, a first agreement was reached with institutions in Albania, Croatia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, and Romania.

During its third session, in October 2001, the Governing Board organized a round table with key local organizations in order to promote the SEE-ECN and to

increase visibility of the country nodes. By February 2002, all SEE countries were represented and have since then contributed to the gathering of information and the translation of a large number of documents.

Currently the SEE-ECN country nodes are:

- Albania: Educational Democratic Centre.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: Student Resource Center (SRCe).
- Bulgaria: National Institute of Education.
- Croatia: Institute for Social Research—Zagreb (ISR)/Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD).
- FYR of Macedonia: University St. Ciril and Metodij, Institute for Pedagogy.
- Romania: Institute for Educational Sciences.
- Montenegro: Ministry of Education and Science, School Inspectorate in Podgorica.
- Kosovo: Kosova Education Centre.
- Moldova: Institute for Public Policy.
- Serbia: Educational Forum.

A meeting of country nodes was organized by CEPS (February 2002), in co-operation with the Romanian node (the Institute for Educational Sciences) and sponsored by the Open Society Fund's 'East-East Program'. A country nodes meeting was held in Bucharest, Romania. It was an occasion for the participants to openly discuss recent co-operation and possibilities in the future of the project. The conclusions of the meeting reiterated the responsibilities and tasks of the country nodes. They serve as guidance for current activities and are of great use for the new activity plans that are established every four months.

VII. EVENTS

During the implementation of the project, SEE-ECN has actively participated in the preparation and organization of numerous events. On one occasion, SEE-ECN country nodes identified several educational experts for a workshop held in Ljubljana (March 2002). Moreover, the SEE-ECN home page has a calendar of conferences and other important meetings, workshops, summer universities, etc., in which one can find over seventy announcements of forthcoming events in the field of education related to South-East Europe. More than 120 announcements of past events are recorded in the archive. The SEE-ECN played a particularly important role in the following two events:

1. Workshop on 'Drafting Education Legislation - Art or Craft?' (Bled, Slovenia, 27-29 September 2001)

The forty-two participants in this workshop were legal specialists as well as experts in educational contents and systems of South- East European Stability Pact countries. The objective of the workshop was to exchange practical information and know-how relevant for the preparation of legislation in education and for human resource development in South-East Europe. The workshop thus contributed to capacity building of legal staff and personnel of Ministries and Parliamentary commissions who are currently preparing legislation.

The SEE-ECN was deeply involved in the preparations of the workshop and of background materials on education legislation, which were gathered from SEE countries as well as other parts of Europe. The materials have been made accessible on the SEE-ECN website, either in the languages of the SEE region, or in English, French or German.

2. 'Drafting New Curricula' Workshop (Bohinj, Slovenia, 26-28 April 2002)

Details on the workshop can be found throughout this report. It is worth mentioning here that it has been the largest event organized within the SEE-ECN so far.

3. Difficulties encountered

During the implementation of the SEE-ECN project, CEPS faced various problems particularly in establishing contacts to animate the network, as well as in collecting documents and information. This resulted from:

- Continued political instability and/or alternations in changes of governments (elections) in more or less all countries and consequently frequent modifications of contact persons.
- Insufficient levels of information technology: a lack of computers, or standards of IT (properly equipped and trained users, etc.) vary, which sometimes hinders communication, etc.
- Technical problems: hardware and software are obsolete in most SEE countries, connections are slow and unstable; regular surface mail encounters obstacles, power-cuts occur, etc.
- Incomplete texts and other written materials are sent to CEPS; problems with copyrights.
- Lack of regular response from partners.
- Lack of good translators; high costs of translation in some countries.

VIII. THE SEE-ECN TODAY

Today, largely with the assistance of the country nodes, the SEE-ECN represents the most comprehensive educational information network in South-East Europe. It collects and constantly updates information on educational reform processes in South-East Europe and provides support to educational researchers, policy analysts and decision makers. Key documents (strategy papers, curricula, legislation, reports, etc.) are collected in a virtual library (more than 1,300 documents, sorted into seven different clusters: basic information and database; national policy documents; good practices; educational legislation; reviews and reports; curriculum; expertise; and theory) and numerous educational documents from within and outside the region are accessible in English as well as in regional lan-

guages (Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Macedonian, Romanian, Serbian, Slovenian).

An expert database has been established to provide information on available expertise in various areas—currently the network has more than 100 registered experts. The network counts more than 200 registered members (ministries, international organizations, universities, schools, institutes and NGOs) and the SEE-ECN web page includes a calendar of events, which provides a regular overview of activities in the region (workshops, conferences, meetings, etc.). The statistics, showing an average 6,000 to 8,000 visitors to the site each month, are the best proof of recent rapid development of the network. The SEE-ECN page has gained recognition in the region and beyond, and has extended its role as an information junction point to connect and bring educational experts from the region closer together.

CEPS has responded to numerous requests from organizations, institutions, and individuals from within as well as outside the region, who have referred to the network for different reasons. Some examples of the types of technical assistance CEPS provided are:

- The SEE-ECN provided materials concerning the organizational structures of several ministries to the Albanian country node to assist in the reconstruction of the Ministry of Education in Albania.
- The SEE-ECN provided specific information on curricula from Slovenia requested by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Participation of experts from the region and from other European countries has been organized using lists of experts in "'Experts"' database (e.g. conference on curriculum development in Belgrade, workshop on higher education in Moldova, etc.).
- CEPS and the SEE-ECN country nodes identified several educational experts from within the region for a workshop in Ljubljana (March 2002).
- CEPS assisted students from FYR Macedonia and Cyprus who requested information concerning the completion of their studies in Slovenia.
- Information and consultation have been provided to non-regional experts, post-graduate students (e.g. from Ottawa).

In the spring of 2001, CEPS was awarded a Democracy Commission Grant for the SEE-ECN programme. This enabled the development of the Civic Education Curriculum, a SEE-ECN sub-project, which is of particular importance to the countries in the region. Additional means enabled the SEE-ECN to further improve the selection of documents on civic education, so that by April 2002, thirty-seven original papers on civic education (approximately 1,020 pages) were published on the web-site. In addition, the SEE-ECN accomplished the translation of fifty-eight documents (approximately 1,560 pages of papers on civic education).

IX. OBJECTIVES IN THE NEXT PHASE: FROM AN INFORMATION TO A CO-OPERATION NETWORK

The current SEE-ECN project is scheduled to end in October 2002. By then, it is expected that the network will have the most comprehensive collection of information on education systems and on past and ongoing education reforms in South-East Europe (including, for example, the OECD Thematic Reviews of National Educational Policies of all countries/entities of SEE).

Where will we go from there? During the next phase, the network aims to increase and expand its existing activities and information sources with a focus on the European dimension (key documents, contacts, links), as well as on participatory/inter-active features of the web site (discussions, mailing list, on-line journal). While preserving the SEE-ECN as a light, lean structure, existing activities could be extended to cover new aspects. The network's profile will be determined by the recommendations of the feasibility study, the experience it has gathered so far, its experience in networking and consultations with key actors. We believe that the network can continue to provide added value to already existing regional, inter-regional and national co-operation networks. In maintaining its strong focus on virtual communication, it can provide a comprehensive, yet cost effective network.

Two main aspects that the network will focus on are the role of the country nodes and the identification of key areas for training and networking activities. If the network is to operate on a higher level, the role of the SEE-ECN country nodes will have to strengthen in order for them to become more active. They should stimulate the development of the national networks and, even more importantly, ensure that a wide sector of national stakeholders has access to the network and is encouraged to actively participate in it.

Currently, CEPS is preparing the establishment of an online discussion forum within the SEE-ECN site, where educational experts can openly discuss various issues in the educational field. The extent to which the SEE educational public will respond to this initiative is yet to be seen. We feel that the implementation of this task, which will require considerable time and effort, would represent a significant improvement, even though we remain aware of the problems related to the use of the Internet in the region. The insufficient level of information technology (small number of computers and properly skilled users), together with technical problems (slow and unstable connections, even power-cuts), lead us to believe that the current number of average monthly visitors on our website is a success and that we might have reached the optimal number for the time being, given the regional infrastructure. The enlargement of influence of the SEE-ECN website will therefore have to be accompanied by a general improvement of information technology in the region.

It is also clear that steps towards the expansion of the network will in large part depend on key actors in the field of education and training in South-East Europe. The next step will therefore be to identify key areas for training and networking activities, to be carried out in consultation with regional nodes and other members. This would allow interested members to "'buy-in"' training modules/activities from experts and institutions in the region. Regular assessments of the activities and target areas would, on the other hand, allow immediate and flexible responses to educational reform needs both on the level of policy development, system improvement and policy implementation.

Finally, the SEE-ECN could provide an annual programme of core activities and organize various events on behalf of other institutions/organizations that are in line with the overall philosophy of the SEE-ECN. In return, these activities, would successfully promote regional, and interregional participation in wider European co-operation networks.

NOTE

1. See: http://www.see-educoop.net/

III. Summary seminar report

I. BACKGROUND

A number of thematic reviews of education have been conducted by the OECD (Autumn 2000–Summer 2001) in countries of South-East Europe (SEE) within the framework of the Stability Pact Task Force on Education and Youth. These reviews have provided systematic insight into national systems of education and have formulated a range of recommendations touching upon curriculum, legislation, access, vocational education and training, and life long learning strategies, among other issues. Within this framework, the Stability Pact Task Force on Education and Youth document 'Strategy 2001' has planned a series of seminars for 2001 and 2002 aimed at human resource development and capacity-building in South-East European countries in the area of educational reform. The first seminar was on educational legislation (Autumn 2001) and was organized by the Open Society Education Programmes in South-East Europe (OSEP-SEE) and the Center Centre for Educational Policy Analysis (CEPS). The seminar on curriculum development that took place in Bohinj in April 2002 was the second in this series.

II. RATIONALE

It is now widely recognized that curriculum renewal is an important component of educational reform and quality improvement. Moreover, thematic reviews of education conducted in the countries of South-East Europe (SEE) highlight the importance of curricular change in educational reforms that have been planned or are underway. Addressing issues of curricula review and reform, however, has been delayed in countries affected by armed conflict over the past decade. As a result, lack of expertise in this area now constitutes an important obstacle to educational reform in many of the countries of the region. In such a context, developing a common understanding of educational reform through dialogue and sharing of experience—based on both regional processes of reform, as well as on examples from other regions of the world—is an important contribution to building or reinforcing regional capacity for curricula change.

III. PURPOSE

The aim of the seminar was to contribute to human resource development and capacity-building in the field of curriculum development in South-East European countries through the exchange of information and know-how on the basis of case studies in curricula review and reform. The seminar thus aimed to strengthen the South-East European Education Co-operation Network, by reinforcing co-operation among experts from the SEE and other countries.

IV. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1 To exchange information and share experiences on national processes of curriculum review and reform.
2 To analyse contemporary trends in curriculum development based on regional and international case studies and examples of good practice.
3 To identify specific needs of SEE countries in the area of curriculum renewal, in particular, by discussing concrete situations and issues.
4 To establish contacts between experts for the SEE region and beyond in view of initiating further sustainable co-operation.

The outcomes of the workshop will contribute to strengthening the South-East European Co-operation Network (SEE-ECN, see: http://www.see-educoop.net/).

V. PARTICIPANTS

A total of seventy-nine participants took part in this workshop. Applications were invited from teams of specialists of countries belonging to the Stability Pact of South-East Europe. The participating countries, and their corresponding number of delegates were: Albania (4), Bosnia & Herzegovina (3), Bulgaria (4), Croatia (8), Kosovo (8), FYR Macedonia (4) Moldova (3), Montenegro (5) Romania (3), Serbia (8), and Slovenia (6). Each country team comprised two or three curriculum specialists from educational institutions, as well as one or two decision-makers in charge of educational reform in their ministries. Participants were invited jointly by the International Bureau of Education (UNESCO:IBE) and the Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS), through the South- East European Educational Co-operation Network (SEE-ECN) operated by CEPS at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Support was also provided by the Open Society Education Programs – South-East Europe.

Foreign and regional experts in curriculum development participated as keynote speakers, workshop moderators, and rapporteurs. Experts from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Hungary, Lebanon, Norway, Slovenia and the United Kingdom moderated the workshop sessions.

VI. A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

Prior to the seminar, materials on curriculum development at the pre-school and primary levels were gathered from SEE countries as well as from a selection of countries outside the region. The materials—in the languages of the SEE region or in English, French or German—were made available electronically through the SEE-ECN website (www.see-educoop.net) and in course materials for participants (see Annex I for a full list of background materials). Critical assessments of recent processes of curricular change were presented through country case studies—of a European Union-associated country (Slovenia), of a EU-country (Norway), and of a non-European country (Lebanon).

VII. WORKING METHOD

The working languages of the workshop were English and 'South Slavic'. In order to minimize the need for long presentations, participants were expected to familiarize themselves with course materials prior to the workshop (via the Internet). Workshop sessions focused on frank exchange of experience and strategies around a selection of topics related to curriculum development (e.g. logistics of curricular renewal, subject contents in curricula, curriculum for social cohesion and multiculturalism, curriculum and quality education for all). Participants discussed the processes of drafting, public debate, and adoption of new curricula, as well as the nature of the curricular products that they result in. In smaller groups, country teams had the opportunity to draw upon the experience of specialists from other countries on specific issues they are facing in their national efforts. A significant portion of the seminar was organized in small working groups, where participants concentrated on analysing concrete curricular issues, identifying specific needs of SEE countries, and drafting proposals. These proposals were integrated into a short report on the current state of curriculum development that each participating country submitted two weeks after the end of the seminar. Follow-up to the seminar is to be negotiated on the basis of these national proposals and recommendations.

VIII. NATIONAL PROPOSALS FOR REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

Each country team was requested to focus their short report on their achievements so far, the main challenges for the future, as well as on the formulation of proposals for further development of regional co-operation through the SEE-ECN.

The recommendations can be grouped into four broad categories:

- *Co-operation in the field of curriculum design and development* related to requests of common methodologies and approaches to curricula within the region.
- *Information exchanges* on practices and experiences in the region.
- *Regional capacity-building activities*, directed towards face-to-face exchanges of expertise and information.
- *The use of the virtual network* emphasizing the need for a continuing exchange as was initiated through SEE-ECN. New features, as well as suggested improvements for the existing website, are being proposed.

1. Co-operation in the field of curriculum design and development

- As part of a regional strategy, to create a draft model of a curriculum comprising the main principles to be respected by countries in the region and to be adopted by consensus (Albania).
- To implement a common methodology for curriculum assessment and knowledge assessment (Moldova).
- To develop guidelines for designing curricular materials at the regional level (through seminars) on various issues such as:
  - the history of the Balkans;
  - literatures of the Balkans;
  - civics and social studies;
  - teacher training, etc. (Romania).
- To establish criteria for a possible agreement on a flexible curriculum for minorities (Albania).
- To harmonize national legislation in the field of minority education (Moldova).

2. Information exchanges

- To create a regional centre for curricular resources and comparative studies in the field of curriculum development (Moldova).
- To establish a mechanism for regular reporting on events and changes in educational systems within the region, as well as on transformations that countries may experience. This would involve practically all European and many other countries. It would be particularly useful if those reports would contain crucial information on evaluation methods, procedures and criteria (Serbia).
- To continue to translate curricula into the languages of the region (Serbia).
- To disseminate publications on curriculum issues in the region (Albania).
- To provide access to information databases in targeted areas (Moldova).
- To initiate dialogue in order to achieve consensus between educational professionals and policy makers regarding the needs and priorities in changing the educational system (Croatia).

3. Regional capacity-building activities

- To broaden the exchange of specialists (Albania).
- To promote the exchange of experiences and learning from each other (Kosovo).
- To provide seminars, workshops, round-tables and study visits through the SEE-ECN network (Kosovo).
- To share experiences in dealing with similar challenges, for instance, on evaluating new curricula in the diverse contexts within the region (Moldova).
- To organize co-operative activities (conferences, workshops, etc.) focused on the specific needs of participating countries (Moldova).
- To support policy-oriented research that assesses the current status and needs (Croatia).
- To organize regular meetings, such as the one in Bohinj, with a concrete and comprehensive agenda, in order to ensure continuous information exchange and consultations in the broader region. These meetings contribute to qualified and informed decision-making, both on a strategic and practical level (Serbia).
- To conduct teacher-training activities in the following fields:
  - educating for tolerance in a multi-cultural environment;
  - conflict management, prevention and resolution;
  - post-conflict rehabilitation (Moldova).
- To expand capacity in the field through in-service teacher education (Croatia).
- To carry out parallel upgrading of contents and methodology of teaching/learning processes through in-service teacher education (Croatia).

4. The use of the virtual network

- To establish contacts through the website (Albania).
- To establish discussion groups on the website where every country could suggest 'topical' issues to be discussed. The issues could be preceded by short research reports on the topic in individual countries. This will give SEE-ECN an opportunity to become a regional discussion forum in the field of education (Bulgaria).
- To establish a new South-East European countries joint column on the website (Bulgaria).
- To present the harmonization of educational legislation in individual countries with European legislation in a new joint column (Bulgaria).
- To ensure more content information in already existing columns on the site (Bulgaria).
- To organize materials on the web by themes rather than by country. Possible themes include: mathematics, languages, social studies, minorities, teacher training, etc. (Romania).
- To set up online discussion groups for each of the themes presented. Thus the network might become a live forum of debate for each of the issues considered important for curriculum design (Romania).
- To establish an on-line consulting process, with technical assistance from well known international educational experts acting as counsellors (Moldova).
- To improve the quality of the existing site, making content more easily accessible in order to obtain responses, suggestions and experiences in a more efficient manner (Serbia).

Feedback and evaluation by the participants

Feedback and evaluation were collected at the close of the workshop through means of a questionnaire. The final evaluation consisted of four 1-5 ratings and three open questions, assessing different aspects of the workshop.

A. RATED QUESTIONS:

1. Overall, how would you evaluate the workshop?

2. The objective of the workshop was to provide for an exchange of practical information and expertise in the process of drafting new curricula. To what extent did the workshop fulfil this objective?

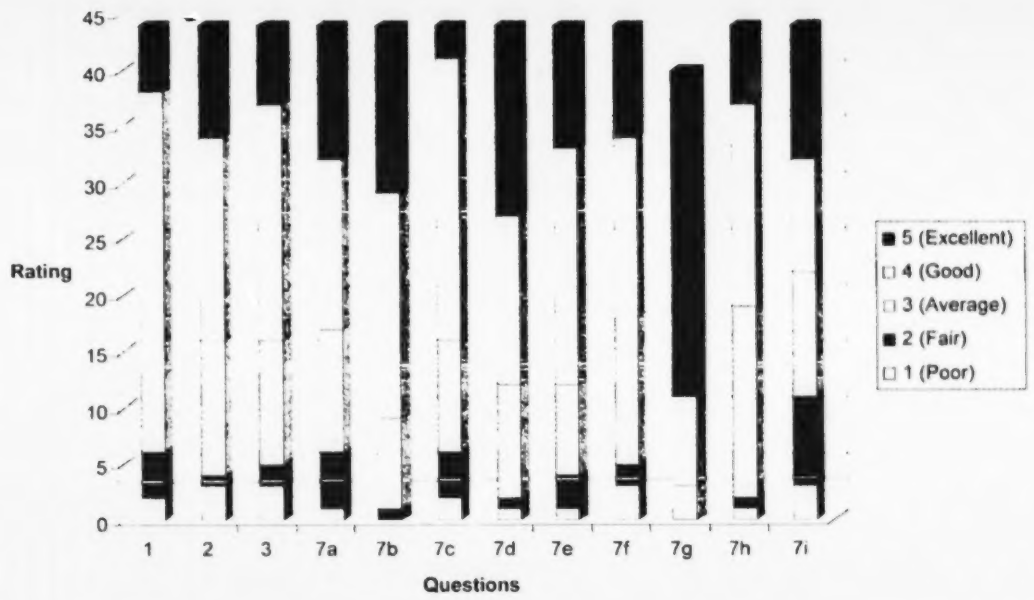
3. To what extent did the workshop meet your expectations?

7. Please rate the following:

(a) Concept and design of the workshop.
(b) Plenary session – presentations and discussion.
(c) Small group session.
(d) Organizational arrangements *prior* to the workshop.
(e) Organizational arrangements *at* the workshop.
(f) Workshop facilities.
(g) Translation services.
(h) Workshop materials.
(i) Accommodation and meals.

For questions 1, 2, 3 and 7 (a-i), Figure 1 below depicts the distribution of ratings.

FIGURE 1. Evaluation of the Bohinj seminar by the participants



B. OPEN QUESTIONS:

4. How do you intend to use the experience of this workshop back in your home country?

The sharing of information was one of the main points that the participants identified. They gathered useful experiences and ideas from the workshop discussions, but also from the SEE- SCN website, and the contacts they made while in Bohinj. They expressed their intention to use this information in their respective countries in order to share it with their colleagues and/or other key stakeholders (e.g. members of faculties or commissions for education, ministries, teachers, local community members and NGOs). This would be done through the organization of seminars and workshops on how to design school curricula.

The participants appreciated the opportunity of comparing their curriculum reform process with that of other countries. This gave them the opportunity to learn from a variety of experiences and to gather information on best practices. Some of them expressed the need for increased co-operation with educational faculties, institutes and departments in order to involve the key stakeholders because the reform process 'depends on solutions in the whole system and because it is a long-term process'. Including teachers in the process and integrating the experiences into teacher training was mentioned in the evaluation on several occasions.

Furthermore, the participants will use the outcomes of the seminar to facilitate the implementation phase of the curriculum. Romania, which is including the last year of kindergarten in compulsory education, referred to the discussion on early childhood as a supportive element in this process. Other explicit references were made towards elaborating a new policy in the field of minority education; implementing some ideas within the development of a regional model for teacher education; and using the information on curriculum, quality and education.

5. What was particularly relevant for you and your country?

The participants highly appreciated learning about the different approaches that other countries in the region have toward their curriculum renewal process. It provided them with comparative materials that could help them to assess whether they are 'on the right track in curriculum renewal'. Many countries consider the process to be complex and found that they have encountered very similar difficulties and challenges along the way. The experiences of Norway and Slovenia were explicitly mentioned as examples of good practice.

The participants appreciated both the plenary sessions, as well as the workgroups on *Minorities and curriculum*, *Designing and approving new curricula*, *Early childhood* and *Foreign-language teaching*. They fur-

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thermore emphasized the usefulness of the seminar for teacher training, and stated that it had provided 'solutions for some 'unresolved' problems in high-school education and advice on how to address university professors'.

The attention of the participants was particularly focused on the importance of the quality of the curriculum and the constant upgrading of its framework and subjects. They learned about mechanisms of approving new curricula, as well as about the formulation of national standards.

6. What was not relevant for you and your country?

One of the opinions expressed was that it does not suffice to exchange experiences of curriculum reform processes with other countries in order to develop effective and appropriate solutions for difficult problems. A seminar like this should provide participants with directions and instructions to design and approve new curricula. Also, moderators occasionally did not intervene effectively during the discussions and this occasionally resulted in unfocused sessions.

The seminar was considered, by some, to lack focus. For others, the scope was too broad and the topics too numerous. Because the participating countries are undergoing different phases of educational reform, the emphasis they place on the topics discussed varies. As a result, some specific issues that were relevant for a particular context were not applicable to another. In these instances, narrower, more specific workshops would have been more useful.

IV. Plenary sessions

1. The decade of change

Slavko Gaber

I. EDUCATION AND CHANGE

Education, like other social subsystems, is dialectically related to change in that it has the potential to take on both reproductive and transformative roles. Therefore, educational changes may reflect the wider process of societal changes, as well as contributing to provoke them. However, regardless of the direction of the relationship between education and social change, it is important to distinguish, as does the author, between educational change and reform. As the author says: 'Not all changes, superficial or more radical, transient or longer lasting, are worthy of the name reforms'.

The period spanning the 1980s up to the early 1990s has been a decade of educational reforms in countries of the European Union. In the case of South-East Europe, the issue of education and change is less an issue of determining whether there is a need for educational change, as well as whether the process of educational change is externally or internally driven. Rather, it is argued that the more crucial questions are those pertaining to the timeliness of undertaking educational change, as well as defining the direction of that change. This is true for Slovenia.

II. POLITICAL TRANSITION AND EDUCATIONAL CHANGE IN SLOVENIA

The article argues that educational reforms in Slovenia were initiated in a context of social demand for change. Education was an important element in the structure of the nation's expectations, both in the pre-, and even more so, in the post-independence period. Indeed, educational change in Slovenia began prior to the political transition. This is reflected in the range of innovative local projects; for example, including the re-establishment of the gymnasium/grammar schools, the re-introduction of the school-leaving Matura examination, and the substitution of civics teaching according to the curriculum of the Yugoslav Republic ('Self-management and Marxism') by sociology and civic culture. Consequently, the basic assumption that informed the process of implementing educational reform in Slovenia was that changes were already taking place and that they were going in the right direction. It was therefore thought most appropriate to adopt a step-by-step approach to educational change, despite the scale of political change taking place in parallel. This measured approach was capable of building on processes of change already underway. The progressive approach also allowed for sufficient time to shape the direction of change and to define the modalities for implementation based on a review of comparative research findings.

III. PROCESS OF CONSULTATION ON CURRICULUM POLICY CHANGE

This step-by-step approach was reflected in the rich process of broad national debate on the nature and direction of education change. However, broad-based consultations did not always result in consensus due to what the author calls two 'illusions': (1) the euphoria following democratic transition created the illusion that it would be possible to formulate a concept for reform directly from academic debate; and (2) the illusion on the part of decision-makers 'on how far open discussion can go'. After a two-year period of national consultation, a group of experts was appointed by the Ministry of Education to work on a basic strategy paper that resulted in the 1995 White Paper (*Education in the Republic of Slovenia*).

IV. THE PROCESS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

The White Paper served to draft new educational legislation in 1996 and was followed by the formation of the National Curriculum Council (NCC), a body of experts from different fields relating to education. The NCC carefully studied international experiences and strategies of educational reform and curricula change, and used the lessons learned to inform the drafting of the *Guidelines to curricular reform*. These guidelines represented the framework for further works projects to be undertaken by the NCC and its associated bodies. These included the five field curricular commissions for pre-school education, compulsory education, grammar schools, technical and vocational education, and adult education. The NCC analysed the existing programme at the time, compared it to foreign programmes, and prepared a proposal for a new subject curricula at the various levels of the education system.

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2. The implementation of curricula and evaluation: experiences from educational reforms in Norway

Arild Thorbjornsen

I. BACKGROUND TO 'REFORM '94'

One of the main reforms of the 1990s in Norway has been 'Reform '94' for upper secondary education, which gave all students between the age of 16 and 19 the statutory right to three years of secondary education. This reform was introduced in order to reinforce vocational training and to foster streamlining entry into tertiary education. Specialization was considered too extensive and electives too numerous, resulting in difficult or even wrong choices by students. Progress from one level of education to another was poor, as was the link between schools and training in industry. Furthermore, there were too few positions for apprentices and insufficient opportunities to complete vocational education and training.

One of 'Reform '94's' key initiatives was the establishment of a follow-up service for school dropouts in order to re-integrate early leavers within the period of their statutory right. Another change was the merging of general and vocational education. A new model for vocational education was introduced, consisting of two years at upper secondary school and two years of apprenticeship. As streamlining into tertiary education was considered to be a weakness, the 115 existing foundation courses were reduced to thirteen areas of study. Three of these areas qualify students for college or university studies, and ten of them lead to a trade or journeyman's certificate.

II. DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A CORE CURRICULUM

This article explores the implementation and evaluation of 'Reform '94', as well as on the structure and changes in the Norwegian National Curriculum. The general process of change in modern society revealed the need for a policy document defining aims, principles and basic values that all education should be based on. A core curriculum was therefore defined in 1993 for primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and adult education. This core curriculum also provides guidelines for the development of new study programmes. The greatest challenge has been to integrate the core skills into the different subject or course curricula.

The new curriculum is very much focused on participation and motivation of all stakeholders. Assistance is provided to students and teachers in order for them to deal with the changes and reforms in the system. An innovative 'guide' was developed, presenting the contents of the core curriculum, and key issues, such as the need for motivation, planning and responsibility in relation to the learning process. Furthermore, a new regulation on psychological and social-pedagogical counselling was drafted, which and gave students a statutory right to counselling and career guidance required. To help teachers adapt to their new role and new teaching methods, methodological guides and other educational resources have been developed and a new programme for the education of vocational teachers is scheduled to be launched between 2000 and 2006. In terms of assessment, a regulation was issued in 1995, stipulating the students' right to individual, non-graded assessment. Research has shown that by providing students with continuous feedback on their work, non-graded assessment is indeed effective in motivating students for further and possibly lifelong learning.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

A major research programme was initiated in order to evaluate the implementation of 'Reform '94'. Results indicate that, overall, teachers and students are satisfied with the first five years of the reform.

The major successes identified were:

- a decline in youth un-employment as a result of the statutory right;
- an improvement in the thought-flow into tertiary education, so that more young people obtain a national qualification;
- better co-operation between schools and working life;
- increased engagement of social partners in curriculum development.

Some of the weaknesses were:

- great variations between schools;
- the lack of the reduction in the number of courses;
- limited changes in traditional student/teacher relationships;
- higher expectation in the degree of participation of students in the planning process;
- a decline in adult education caused by the statutory right attributed to young people.

3. The role of education for social cohesion in a divided society: the case of Lebanon

Nemer Frayha

The case of Lebanon illustrates how the future of a country is attributable to the way in which schools foster social cohesion with students from various religious communities and then shape these students to be future citizens.

I. CONTROVERSY ABOUT LEBANON'S IDENTITY

Divisions of various natures characterize the history of Lebanon and have shaped the face of its society today. Geo-political and religious cleavages are mainly responsible for different views concerning the country's identification, especially when the notion of the modern State started to affect thinking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Part of the population, mainly Muslims, considered Lebanon as part of the Arab world, while the other part, mostly Christians, saw it as part of the Mediterranean region. This controversy was intensified during the last few years of the French mandate. The National Pact of 1943, declared that Lebanon would be a sovereign state with an Arab face. This was to serve as a compromise and to eliminate many of the differences between Christian and Muslim groups.

II. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION DURING THE MANDATE (1920-43)

When the French protectorate succeeded Ottoman dominance in 1920, divisions in society and national identity took a new course. Throughout the mandate time, private schools, which were established by missionaries and nationals, dominated the education system. Meanwhile, public schools were limited in number and influence. Because the French were in charge of the administration of education, schools, curricula, textbooks and examinations; they were also in a position to determine the educational orientation of students. When the 1925 curriculum was developed, the French were well aware of the existing tensions and the dangers of *Taifiyah* (sectarian conflict) and they called upon teachers and students for unity and tolerance.

III. EDUCATION AFTER INDEPENDENCE (1943)

After independence, the Lebanese government faced the urgent task of creating a sense of social unity and nationhood among the Lebanese people. This task was to be based on common principles and values, rather than on the historically divisive issue of religious affiliation. Education was to be the means of achieving this goal. In particular, it would emphasize citizenship education, orientation towards freedom, independence and national pride, enhancing the Arabic language and teaching Lebanese history and geography. The Lebanese government platform in 1944 declared: 'school is the best soil to cultivate virtues and tolerance'.[1] Muslim and Christian private schools welcomed the new policy. However, the government continued to push its efforts towards centralization by enacting laws, developing curricula and supervising textbook use. In response, the private schools perceived this as an indirect accusation against them for perpetuating social, religious and political division among Lebanese youth. Hence, by making the 1946 curriculum compulsory for both public and private schools, the government believed that it would unify students' social and political orientation.

However, the government was not always consistent in its policy regarding the role of education in a divided society. Educational institutions that violated laws and regulation were not systematically punished. As a result, religious communities once again supported many schools. The overall situation in the region, along with the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, turned the governments' attention away from education. Furthermore, the crisis of 1950 showed that the expected role of education had failed. Lebanese society became more divided along religious lines, and this lead to a civil war, which lasted until 1958.

In 1968, during a time of great division over many issues (such as the emergence of the PLO, Abd al-Nasser's Pan-Arabism, the aftermath of the 1967 War, etc.) and an inequitable modernization process, a new curriculum was introduced. Compared to the 1946 curriculum, it clearly regressed with regard to its emphasis on nationalism and social solidarity. Curriculum developers assumed that, as a result, society would become homogeneous with minimal willingness and effort.

In terms of methodology the new curriculum focus was on information absorption rather than on analysis, evaluation or critical thinking. Students were thus not given the opportunity to discuss, analyse or diagnose their society and its differences. A community involvement approach was not included, and assessment techniques were concentrated on examination scores only.

Meanwhile, textbook contents did not deal with social issues in a way that would contribute to tackling social and national problems. Civics textbooks of the 1980s described the election process, but did not encourage students to participate by voting. Textbooks mentioned religious tolerance in an idealistic way without taking into account the reality of the Lebanese society, which was as intolerant regarding religious or political affiliation. Therefore, the education system clearly did not respond to the existing pre-occupations of the country. The school and its textbooks portrayed the society as functioning harmoniously, and students were shocked when they realized how deep and destructive the religious issues of their daily lives really were.

IV. THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE CIVIL WAR

After the Civil War, which started in 1975 and ended in 1989 with the al-Taef Agreement, the curriculum was yet again modified. In fact, the agreement included guidelines for educational reform in the country. It required the development of new curricula, as well as the uniting of history and civics textbooks, which were to be published by the Educational Centre for Research and Development (ECRD). This led to the 1994 'Plan for Educational Reform', which included objectives such as: strengthening national affiliation and social coalition among students; providing the new generation with basic knowledge, skills and expertise; as well as an emphasis on national upbringing and authentic Lebanese values.[2] These objectives were repeated and elaborated in the 1997 Curriculum, which was implemented in 1998. The social studies curriculum includes many detailed objectives concerning Lebanon's identity as an Arab state, respect and acceptance of others, tolerance, values of personal freedom and human rights.

V. INTRODUCING TEACHERS

As a result of these changes, in terms of the content of education, a lot has been accomplished in promoting social unity and civic consciousness. The next step will now be to implement these practices throughout the country. The role of teachers is crucial here, as they are considered to be a key element in the success or failure of any educational plan. Teachers thus need to be informed of the importance of social cohesion and national unity in the construction of the future Lebanese society.

Some projects have been developed in this direction: ECRD and UNESCO-IPRA sponsored a field study on Lebanese children's' attitudes towards other religions. A teacher's guide: 'Education for Human Rights, Peace and Democracy' was developed to promote peace and democratic behaviour among students. The guide is now considered to be a prototype for dealing with religious problems in a heterogeneous society. Together with the Canadian Bureau for International Education, ECRD also implemented a project on conflict resolution. They did so by using daily problems in the school and solving them in the classroom through dialogue, negotiation and tolerance.

VI. CONCLUSION

Curriculum development entails more than constructing a text and an educational plan. Many stakeholders and elements are involved and influence the outcomes of the implementation of policies. Nevertheless, the school remains a real source of hope for overcoming most of the problems stemming from religious differences.

[1] See the Lebanese Government Platform, no. 2, 1944.
[2] Lebanon, Ministry of Education; ECRD, 1994, *A plan for educational reform in Lebanon*, Beirut: ECRD, p. 8.

V: WORKSHOP REPORTS

1. Designing and approving new curricula

Moderators: Andreja Barle and Peter Rado

I. PRESENTATION BY THE MODERATORS

In order to stimulate reflection and discussion, the workshop was introduced by the distribution of a series of questions. The reactions of the participants were as follows:

1. What does a curriculum determine?

- The educational authorities intend to influence different aspects of education by setting objectives: the structure of the programme; the organization of teaching and learning; different types of classroom interactions; and the teaching process.
- Designing new curricula is about finding the best way to exert this influence and to find the adequate balance between the different educational objectives. The emphasis is often put on the structure (number of hours per subject) rather than on pedagogical practices in the classroom. The hidden curriculum also plays a crucial role in curriculum design.

2. Who determines the content of what is learned in schools?

- Curriculum is not only the property of curriculum designers, it is a public service that supports the growth of the labour market and feeds the overall socio-economic development of a country. Therefore, the involvement and implication of all stakeholders is necessary, through a balanced process of negotiation.
- It is also important to note how the content of a curriculum is determined: What should be done with subjects that are traditionally part of the curriculum? Which subjects will be part of the core curriculum?
- The role of teachers is of particular importance in the design of curriculum content. They have a certain freedom to develop the curriculum within the classroom, so over time they tend to become the writers and the designers of the curriculum. This issue has raised questions on teacher autonomy: How autonomous are teachers and do they aspire to this autonomy?

3. How can a curriculum be implemented?

- The curriculum should remain an object of continuous professional reflection, no matter who implements it or approves it. It is a living document that requires regular revision.
- Implementations should be subjected to local interpretation and conception.
- A new curriculum should overrule and be incorporated into all other regulations in the education system.
- Teacher training, for example, should reinforce the message of the new curriculum.
- In terms of timing, implementation should be slow and regular.
- The curriculum should be regarded as a mandate for teachers to follow and implement.

II. ISSUES RAISED DURING THE DISCUSSION

1. Terminology: 'What is curriculum?'

Confusion still exists with regard to the use of certain terminology such as programme, plan, module or curriculum. The terms 'plan' and 'programme' continue to be used in most countries, mainly as a heritage of former Soviet influence. The introduction of a new terminology led to confusion throughout the education system, but is particularly articulated at the school level. Many teachers ignore the meaning of and differences between these concepts. Furthermore, the definition of curriculum has evolved. This has made comparison on a regional or international level difficult, and has caused confusion when terms are translated.

2. The purpose of the curriculum

It was agreed upon that curriculum is more than a plan or a programme. It is part of a process that involves opportunities of learning. Rightfully, it should reflect the relationship between the school, the community, textbooks and evaluation. Romania raised the need for a 'life curriculum' as being complementary to the official documents. The purpose of this life curriculum would be to reflect what actually takes place in schools.

3. The purpose of education

What is modern education for? What do we want our children to know and what do we want them to know how to do? These are crucial questions that have to be asked when designing a new curriculum. This is due to the highly political and ideological content of the curriculum. Moreover, as the focus nowadays is on the development of analytical and critical skills, it has become more complex to analyse and categorize the content of education, as well as the capacities and skills that children have learned. When developing the New Curriculum Framework for Kosovo, the group of experts started with the question: Why should children go to school? Once the purpose had been established as to: Why learn? Then they discussed the content: What

to learn? Finally, they discussed the issue: How to learn?

4. Rationales for change

How does one know that a curriculum needs to be reformed? In South-East Europe, the rapid political, social, economic, and technical changes have emphasized the need for change. In former Yugoslavia, the curriculum, which was maintained for over a decade, was overloaded in terms of subjects and time. Most countries of the region have started or are completing a revision based on eliminating certain subjects and introducing new ones. Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, have introduced education for democracy and civic liberty, religion and the environment.

5. The role of teachers

The role of teachers is crucial in the process of curriculum development and change. Teacher education leads to more creativity, which in turn stimulates student motivation. A better understanding of the curriculum by teachers will lead to a better use of time, material, content of curricula, as well as less resistance. Well-trained teachers can make important decisions with wide implications in the classroom, whether it is in terms of the content or the methods used in teaching. Innovations and changes, such as the introduction of integrated subjects, have a better chance of successful integration if teachers are familiar with the aims and objectives of the curriculum. Thus, curriculum developers need to define the kind of teachers they would want to actually deal with. Teachers approach the curriculum in different ways and should therefore be assumed to teach in different ways. Rather than forcing a singular approach to teaching and learning, curriculum developers should determine the components of the curriculum and then leave the teachers with a certain freedom in their teaching methods.

2. Curriculum, quality and evaluation

Moderators: Arild Thorbjornsen and Helmut Bachmann

I. INTRODUCTION

1. A broad concept of 'competence'

Developing competence and an 'integrated personality' for a changing society includes subject knowledge, learning competence, social competencies (such as co-operation and teamwork), and methodological competencies (such as problem solving), see Figure 1.

2. Approaches to curricula

- Ideas behind curricula (pedagogical, educational, political).
- Formal official curricula documents (officially prescribed curricula).
- Teachers' understanding of curricula.
- Operational curricula (actually implemented curricula).
- Curricula as experienced by pupils.
- Hidden curricula.

II. GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What is 'quality'? How is quality developed?

2. How can quality be assessed and evaluated?

Establish a set of principles to measure quality in:

- Curriculum development.
- Curriculum implementation.
- Curriculum evaluation.

III. ISSUES

What are the existing systems of monitoring and quality assurance? What are the obstacles to quality assurance?

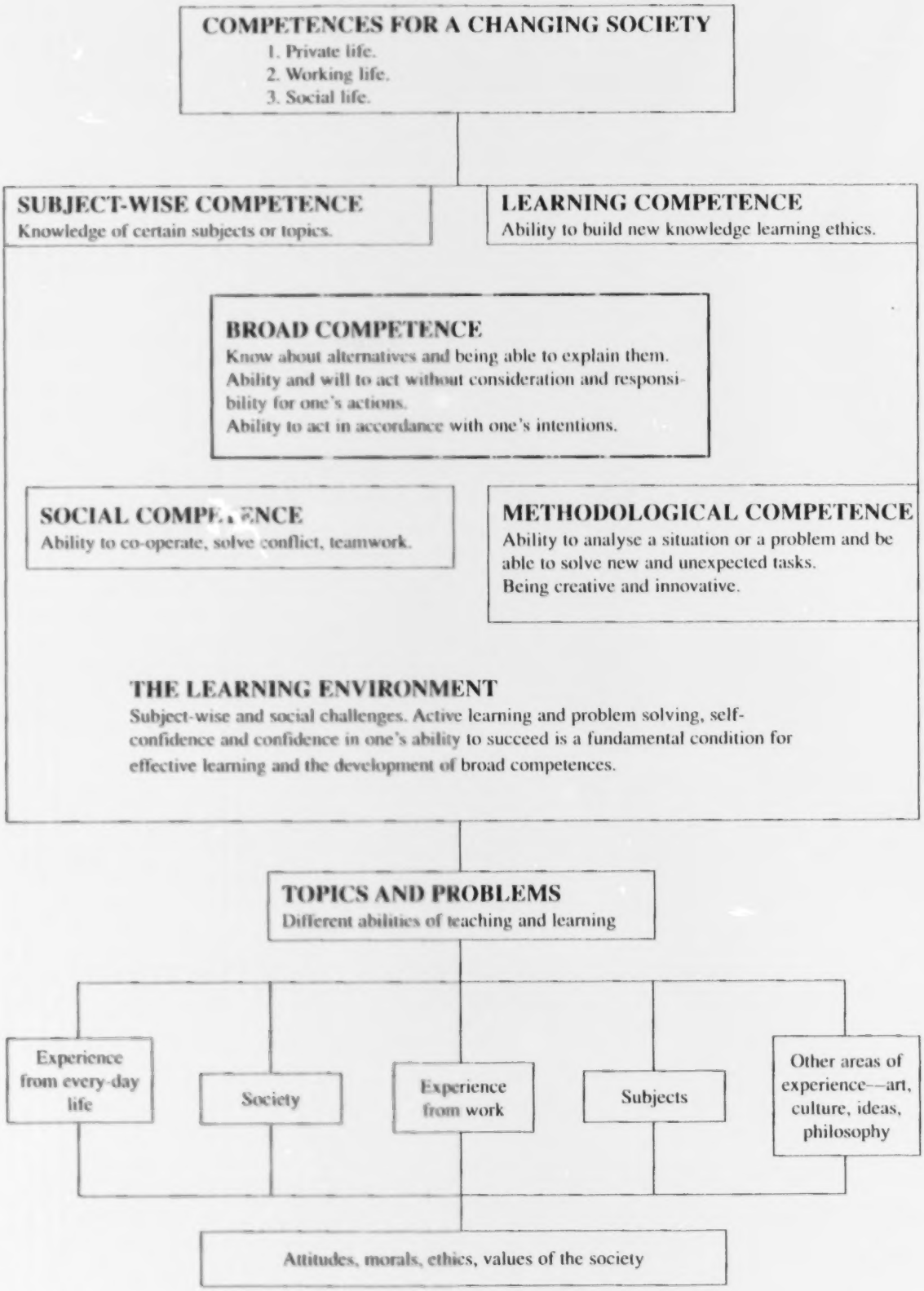
Although the notion of competence-based curriculum appears to be growing in some countries, the general lack of monitoring systems in South-East Europe was identified as an important impediment to quality assurance in the region.

One obstacle to quality enhancement may be related to attitudes toward quality issues. The low ranking of some countries in TIMSS in mathematics and science, for example, came as a surprise to national educational authorities. Unfortunately, the test results were not always used to question the overly theoretical teaching of mathematics and science in the country. Open-mindedness and a critical outlook are essential ingredients for quality improvement.

Although they are expensive, cross-national evaluations such as the TIMMS and the PISA studies, are important modalities of international co-operation. These evaluations help the building of national capacity in evaluation.

The moderators shared the experiences from Norway and Austria in terms of the impact on quality of the involvement of parents in school life.

FIGURE 1. Developing competence and an integrated personality


COMPETENCES FOR A CHANGING SOCIETY
1. Private life.
2. Working life.
3. Social life.
SUBJECT-WISE COMPETENCE
Knowledge of certain subjects or topics.
LEARNING COMPETENCE
Ability to build new knowledge learning ethics.
BROAD COMPETENCE
Know about alternatives and being able to explain them.
Ability and will to act without consideration and responsibility for one's actions.
Ability to act in accordance with one's intentions.
SOCIAL COMPETENCE
Ability to co-operate, solve conflict, teamwork.
METHODOLOGICAL COMPETENCE
Ability to analyse a situation or a problem and be able to solve new and unexpected tasks.
Being creative and innovative.
THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Subject-wise and social challenges. Active learning and problem solving, self-confidence and confidence in one's ability to succeed is a fundamental condition for effective learning and the development of broad competences.
TOPICS AND PROBLEMS
Different abilities of teaching and learning
Experience from every-day life
Society
Experience from work
Subjects
Other areas of experience—art, culture, ideas, philosophy
Attitudes, morals, ethics, values of the society

3. Social studies

Moderators: Nemer Frayha and Janez Krek

I. OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION BY THE MODERATORS

Mr. Frayha opened the session by stating that social studies is defined by educators as a part of social sciences. His presentation centred on the importance of social studies in school curricula, its role in citizenship education, and its time allocation in the school programme.

Formal education may be perceived as an 'institutional means for re-defining and re-structuring activities and identities' in view of integrating youth into society. Among the range of school subjects, social studies play a key role in this process of social integration. This is due to its role in preparing students to be actively participating citizens in their societies. However, the teaching and learning of social studies carries with it a certain risk of politicization, and in some cases possible manipulation. This tends to occur in societies that are divided by religious conflict, ethnic discrimination or cultural differences. In such cases, different communities may use social studies as a forum to assert their particular identities at the expense of a collective sense of national citizenship.

In order to minimize the risk of instrumentalization of social studies, and particularly history, it is possible for curriculum developers to draft general guidelines for the design of social studies curricular materials. This should primarily be based on a nationally agreed-upon set of principles for the definition and design of curricular objectives and subject content. These may include curricular objectives and subject content, which are:

- related to students' age, concerns and abilities;
- deal with the real, social world, not an ideal one;
- demonstrate—when appropriate—the relationships between local and global aspects of social issues;
- include analysis and evaluation activities as necessary means to develop critical thinking;
- offer students opportunities to meet, discuss, study and work with members of different ethnic, national, or religious groups;
- offer opportunities for participation in community affairs.

The main objective of social studies is to prepare young people to be responsible, tolerant, and actively participating citizens in their society's affairs, as well as in an increasingly interdependent world. These objectives should be periodically reviewed in order to reflect evolving social expectations and students' interests and abilities.

II. WHAT IS THE SUBJECT MATTER OF SOCIAL STUDIES?

This depends on the situation in each country, its specific educational policies and the curricular paradigms that structure the learning content. The most common subjects are: history, civics and geography. Arguably, history and civics have a more explicit role in the formation of civics, social and political education than other subjects such as geography. 'History serves as a collective memory of people that is passed on from one generation to the next'. As such, it is a key factor in creating a sense of identity among people. Learning content should not focus on military and political issues only, but should also reflect the everyday lives and social histories of people over time. That is, how people lived, worked, worshiped, dressed, travelled, traded, communicated and so forth. Civics usually deals with political, moral and social education. It is also increasingly integrated into a more comprehensive conception of citizenship education that includes knowledge, competencies and values. As a result, these subjects demand a prominent place in officially intended curriculum, vis-à-vis other subjects, and should not be treated as secondary subjects in terms of:

- weekly distribution of teaching hours;
- the level of qualifications of teachers responsible for such learning content;
- the relative weight given to them in the examinations.

III. SOCIO-CIVICS IN EASTERN EUROPE

According to Mr. Krek, Eastern Europe needs an increased focus on socio-civics so that students can familiarize themselves with the principles of democracy. During the communist era, 'Ethics and society' was a compulsory course for all students. The transition period that followed saw civics loose its goal of developing students as future citizens. Finally, in the 1990s, some changes occurred, especially in Slovenia, when research highlighted the fact that national identity was the main concern of young students.

After the reform, the subject area 'Citizenship education and ethics' included new teaching methods, and students contributed to the definition of its content. In some Eastern European societies, citizenship education programmes were not nationally developed, but 'imported' from outside and translated into teaching and learning materials for schools. This, Mr. Krek believes, does not seem to be the optimum way of forming citizens or developing a good programme in the social sciences.

IV. ISSUES RAISED DURING THE DISCUSSION

The participants discussed a variety of issues with regard to the following questions, which relate to the development of social sciences:

- Why should we include 'history' in a social studies curriculum?
- Who is eligible to write the history textbook?
- What is its content?
- Who should teach history in school?

After the discussion, the accepted outlines were that:

History is an important subject area since its role is to relate the past to the present and to stimulate a sense of nationalism among students. History textbook development should include historians, educators in the field of social studies and schoolteachers. Its content should be related to reality, should not be biased and should cover various historical periods with an emphasis on contemporary history. Only qualified and trained teachers who are specialized in history, should teach the subject because it is sensitive and important at the same time.

Regarding *civics*, the participants welcomed the idea of socio-civics, since it is very close to students' lives and societal development. Concerning geography, the participants agreed that it is necessary to modify the content of this subject from dealing mainly with names and figures to dealing with more authentic issues related to a student's life. The opinions were divided with regard to the issue of unifying civics, history, and geography into one subject at the elementary level.

4. Mathematics

Moderators: Brian Hudson and Zlatan Magajna

I. PRESENTATION BY THE MODERATORS

In this session, Mr. Hudson presented his paper '*Comparative perspectives on curriculum renewal in mathematics education*', in which he raised some key questions: What is mathematics? What do we mean by 'curriculum'? What do we mean by teaching and learning? To answer these questions, he began by exploring some of the key issues that emerged from a study of the European tradition of *Didaktik*, and contrasted them with aspects of the Anglo-American curriculum tradition. He then addressed the issue of the nature of mathematics with an approach at aiming to integrate traditional ideas arising from *Didaktic*, along with a perspective emphasizing *mathematics as communication*. Finally, he referred to the outcomes of the PISA 2000 study (Programme for International Student Achievement, OECD), which provide valuable insights into factors that contribute to the development of knowledge and skills, as well as international comparisons of performances of education systems.

Mr. Magajna presented the Slovenian experience of changing the mathematics curriculum. Although the teaching of mathematics is often viewed as static, it is in fact a dynamic subject, which not only changes in content, but also in its idea of mathematical knowledge. Slovenia decided to change its curriculum for four reasons: (1) the necessity to change the structure of mathematical knowledge; (2) taking into account past and foreseen changes in society; (3) the need to harmonize with other European countries; and (4) the desire to correct the perceived weakness, inconsistencies and deficits of the current curriculum. Changes were planned in three directions: curriculum content (adding, changing, removing, simplifying); learning approaches (aimed at understanding ideas through improved teaching and assessment practices); and changes at the school system level. In terms of implementation, a comprehensive approach was needed. This approach was to take into consideration the major means, instruments and stakeholders. In the case of Slovenia, these were: legislation, cooperation with teachers, educating principals, in-service training of teachers and student-teachers, textbook and related materials, and syllabi. He concluded that changes in the mathematics curriculum are specific to a country and are an integral part of a larger system of changes in education.

II. ISSUES RAISED DURING THE DISCUSSION

1. The nature of mathematics

The responses reflected a wide variation in terms of thinking. For example, mathematics was conceived of as a natural science, a basic subject, a service subject, a discipline for forming the mind, as an art, as difficult but necessary, as being concerned with logical thinking, as being concerned with problem solving, and as being concerned with analytic thinking. Some participants

highlighted the need for more active learning in mathematics and raised questions about how this might best be achieved. Questions were also raised in relation to how we attract young people to the subject, and how we can influence increasing rates of participation beyond the age of 16 in overall terms and also especially on the part of girls. The importance of initial and in-service education, especially of teachers was emphasized.

2. The PISA Study

In reflecting on the PISA study (OECD, 2001), it would seem that many aspects of the fallibilistic view of mathematics are acknowledged. This occurs, at least in part, so that knowledge and skills in mathematics are founded on a dynamic model of lifelong learning and continuous adaptation to a rapidly changing world. Such a broad conception of mathematics knowledge and skills is encapsulated by the term mathematical literacy. The report also emphasizes that such assessment is informed 'but not constrained' by national curricula.

3. Methodologies

Here, finally, in moving towards any 'Western style' system of curriculum planning, the reductionist methodology associated with the Tyler-influenced Anglo-American tradition needs to be approached with caution. Given the onset of the RAPLEX — rapidly changing and increasingly complex — society, the need for a 'systems thinking' approach has never been so evident. Such an approach stresses the fundamental interconnection of the parts, which cannot be treated in isolation from one another. What needs to be recognized is that complex human activity systems cannot be managed by the use of crude performance targets, which distort the goals of the system and induce an instrumental approach on the part of those working within the system. Neither will reductionist 'command and control' methods work, because of the many unintended consequences and the morale-sapping climate for those same people. Rather, such systems need to be managed for the long term. This should be done through incremental improvements via the learning processes of the users and stakeholders themselves, rather than by governments, as learning organizations within a wider culture of evaluation. The characteristics outlined earlier regarding the traditions of Didaktik seem to offer much potential in terms of thinking about such complexity, and also in terms of conceptualising the relative professional autonomy of the teacher within a framework, which guides, but does not direct their work.

5. Literacy and language policies

Moderators: Piet Van de Craen and Igor Saksida

I. PRESENTATION BY THE MODERATORS

As an introduction, Mr Van de Craen presented the recent activities and objectives of the European Language Council (ELC). This organization of universities, other institutes of higher education, and professional associations, aims at quantitative and qualitative improvement of knowledge of the languages and culture within the European Union and beyond.

A clear view on language policies is seen as germane to the further development of the European idea. Since unity in diversity is the background philosophy, it is clear that without a sound language policy, both unity and diversity can be threatened. For years to come, various European (and non-European) languages will continue to play a major role in the development of education in Europe. In this respect, it should be clear that the English-only policy is certainly not the way to go. Instead, a well-balanced language policy at national, regional and institutional levels-which offers opportunities for all languages involved and which matches the region's and or country's traditions-should be considered as the most promising venue.

Therefore, ELC currently focuses on:

1. Language policy issues, stimulating higher education institutes in providing wider opportunities in learning language, creating environments for independent language learning and offering a wider range of programmes and credits. Furthermore, universities and institutions are urged to develop and implement language policies at national, regional and institutional levels and to look for collaboration in the wider field of language and education.
2. The Thematic Network Projects (TNP), in the area of languages is an initiative involving universities, higher education institutes, and associations in developing project proposals for the improvement and innovation of language programmes in higher education

3. ELC and teacher education: as a result of the 1995 White Paper on *Teaching and Learning* of the European Commission, which recommends that all European citizens should master two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue. Following this, the *Advanced Level Programme in Multilingual Education* was developed by nine universities in order to prepare teachers for multilingual education.

Mr. Saksida intervened on the level of literacy and general educational policies. He launched some questions for the participants to react to. These included: How has the new curriculum been designed, approved and introduced to teachers and to the public? Were contemporary, provocative ideas published to avoid later resistance? What was the basis for curriculum drafting? Should two distinct curricula co-exist, for literature and language?

II. ISSUES RAISED DURING THE DISCUSSION

The organization of foreign language teaching differs from country to country. Participants agreed on the importance of a good knowledge of languages for the integration and development of nations, and its individuals, on an economic, social and multicultural level. The issues that countries are facing are the following:

1. English only

Participants felt that, at least for the time being, English is likely to remain the first foreign language studied in Eastern Europe. However, it is felt that this may change over time. The demand for English is enormous, especially in Kosovo. It is also felt that other foreign languages might disappear from the curricula unless special measures are taken. In Croatia's experience, even if English is taught as a second foreign language, it is often better mastered than the first foreign language, because of the strong motivation to learn English.

2. Teacher education

Teacher education was a major preoccupation for the countries of the region. Teacher education faces a number of problems in many countries:

- low social status of the teaching profession;
- lack of qualified teachers;
- need for a curriculum in which the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, are integrated. The language portfolio as developed by the *Council of Europe* could be helpful in this regard;
- need for language provision and recognition of minority languages within the curriculum;
- difficulties in implementing attainment targets. Universities are autonomous and can have a conservative approach towards the delivery of teacher education. They are often not fully informed about the new attainment targets, leading to a distortion in terms of integration of these elements into the teacher education curriculum.

3. Classical languages

Some participants fear that Latin and Greek will disappear from the curricula because of the pressure of modern foreign languages. Teachers try to avoid this by shifting from a pure grammar based to a more cultural based approach. Other participants felt that classical languages should be replaced by courses in 'cultural studies', which would provide a different context for their subjects.

4. Language policy

Most participants were in favour of a modern language policy embedded within the cultural traditions of the region. Such policy should also include efforts to upgrade the teaching profession.

5. Language vs. literature

The distortion lies at the level of decision-making. Academics will be inclined to opt for a separation between the two subjects, while teachers prefer an integrated language and literacy curriculum. Although the current approach is towards integration, some countries, such as Romania, are keeping language and literature as separate subjects. Meanwhile, countries like Slovenia have decided to go with the traditional approach of one subject. In Albania, mother tongue teaching is separated from reading, but research is now looking at how the two can be combined within the new curriculum to form a comprehensive subject that includes reading, writing and understanding.

6. Teacher education

Moderators: Laurence Walker and Pavel Zgaga

I. PRESENTATION BY THE MODERATORS

To introduce the workshop on teacher education, the moderators presented a general overview of their vision on the issue, the pre-occupations that exist and the questions that it raises.

Mr. Laurie Walker largely based his intervention on his reading of the *Green paper on teacher education*. He highlighted two contextual conditions important for curriculum decision-making. The first one is that pre-service education should be regarded as one part of continuous professional development (CPD) that continues after the process of selection, graduation and induction of new teachers into the teaching profession. This concept of CPD removes the pressure from traditional pre-service programmes to attempt to prepare new teachers for a whole lifetime of practice. The other condition is that faculties of education require partnerships with schools in order to carry out their work. These partnerships should be reciprocal, benefiting both parties, as well as transparent in their roles and division of work.

The modern expectations of teacher candidates and pre-service professors are high. They should be able to create powerful learning environments in which students can develop active and constructive processes of acquiring knowledge and skills that stimulate students to set their own goals and to take responsibility for their own learning activities and processes.

There are two models of the autonomous professional teacher, each of which would direct programmes of pre-service teacher education in a different direction. Model 1, the autonomous professional, emphasizes research-based knowledge of teaching, studying, and learning; a rich repertoire of empirically validated practices, based on academic and professional training, which produce a teacher who is competent to make multiple decisions in particular contexts in the interests of clients (students), and in accordance with ethical values. Model 2 is the 'regulated autonomous professional' whose training is directed to teaching practices that are tightly controlled by government agencies' regulations, in programmes that are monitored for adherence to defined standards. This teacher carries out assigned tasks (content and methods) to a defined level of achievement, using craft skills.

Mr. Pavel Zgaga insisted on the interrelation of curriculum renewal and teacher education, requiring a close co-operation between all government bodies and educational institutes involved in the process of designing curricula. The reform of teacher education and training should therefore be harmonized with the reform of the overall system of education in the country, and vice versa. As expectations of the benefits that education brings to a society grow, so do the expectations on what teachers have to know and be able to achieve.

Slovenia has recently reformed its education system. The country needs to address the issue as to whether their new educational goals are feasible from the point of view of the existing system of teacher training, which has had to contend with a range of discrepancies that it inherited. For one, different degrees and programmes are requested for different levels of education; some programmes concentrate more on pedagogical competencies, others on subject matter expertise. Moreover, mobility is hindered between primary and secondary general education and often there is no systemic or appropriate in-service education available. As a result, Slovenia is orienting its teacher education towards a flexible system of pre- and in-service education and training, as well as promoting the teaching profession as an academic profession.

II. ISSUES RAISED DURING THE DISCUSSION

1. Structure of the teaching profession

The renewal of teacher education and training institutions is closely linked with the care for teachers by teachers: how to rejuvenate their structure? In many countries, the occupation is not attractive to young people for various reasons. Some of these reasons are economic and social. If the influx of young specialist into teacher education and training institutions remains low, national education will soon encounter serious problems in this field. In some cases, younger teachers experience rejection from their senior colleagues. Instead of forcing teachers to retire from the profession, incentives are needed to make them want to change; such as promotions among completion of in-service training programmes.

2. Standards

In all the countries of the region there is an obvious need for national standards in teacher education and training, which should also be compatible with other European countries. This would enhance the mobility of students instead of hindering it, as is the case today. Pre-service

education of teachers should be based on professionally reconsidered principles. Common standards in teacher education can assure quality and compatibility on a national scale.

3. Subject vs. pedagogical competency

While developing new curricula, teacher education and training institutions have to pay particular attention to a rational equilibrium between pedagogic methodology (special didactics) and subject (content) study. Often the line between the two is not clear. Professional practical work should also find a proper place in new curricula. Last but not least, sociological and ethical issues should be incorporated into the curricula as well.

4. In-service teacher training

Teacher education and training institutions also play an important role in the development and provision of INSET training. In the region, faced with major problems and lack of resources, this field of human resource development is of highest importance. A system of in-service education and training, which is well structured and supported by the ministry, can decisively help in providing a potential (critical mass) for the implantation of educational reform. In addition, teachers with former associate degrees (two-years) should be supported to enrol into part time study to get a full university degree.

5. Partnerships between schools and educational institutions

Incentives should be developed both in schools and educational institutes to encourage co-operation between schools and educational institutions, and to highlight their benefits for all parties. Schools are often not compensated for mentoring programmes of teacher candidates. In practice, the programme is often restricted to mere observation of classroom practices, instead of integration into the school environment.

6. Postgraduate degrees for teachers

In many countries of the region, the path to post-graduate studies in teacher education is lacking or hindered. Further development of national education largely depends on the opening of such post-graduate studies. Also, in the South-East Europe region, discussions on the so-called Bologna Process are going on; it is crucial to decide what will be the future place of teacher education in the overall systems of higher education.

7. Research and development

Research and development at teacher education institutions should be enhanced and improved. It is an important tool of improving quality at the institution. At the same time, research and development projects at teacher education and training institutions can be decisive for the success of the reforms of national education.

7. Minorities and the curriculum

Moderators: Maria Andruszkiewicz and Peter Rado

I. OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL APPROACHES

1. Separation was the favoured approach in the past, but this can lead to divisions, mutual distrust, ignorance of the reality of others' lives and the creation and maintenance of harmful stereotypes.
2. Assimilation has also been tried in some countries, but pretending that cultural and linguistic differences do not exist has led to children underachieving and dropping out of education.
3. Curriculum enrichment of different kinds is now being attempted across the region. This presents several challenges, particularly with regard to history and language teaching.

II. ISSUES

1. Economic/resource factors

- Unavailability of sufficient State funding to deliver the kind of provision that curriculum designers believe to be necessary.
- Some minorities, especially Roma families, are socially and economically excluded and face difficulties in meeting their basic needs. This affects children's availability for school (many of them work), and performance at school (children are hungry, cold in bad weather so they find it hard to concentrate; they can't afford school materials).

- Employing para-professionals (for example school assistants to support teachers and pupils in integrated classrooms) has been shown to be successful. However, there are unresolved issues as to how these para-professionals are to be paid and what their professional status will be.
- There is a lack of suitable texts and materials for use in diverse classrooms and there is also a lack of awareness to generate critical discussion about diversity and stereotypes among children and teachers.

2. The legacy of conflict in the region

- The challenge of integrating refugees and re-integrating returnees.
- Perceptions of and reactions to other groups seem irrevocably damaged by conflict. There is a residual mutual fear and distrust that has resulted in educational separation of groups of children. There is fear for future prospects of peaceful co-existence that might not be accomplished.
- The region suffers from particular difficulties and sensitivities about teaching history and language

3. Other political factors

- Political sensitivity—fear of policy-makers that equal opportunity measures will be perceived as 'favouring' minorities.
- Lack of widespread public awareness of the case for equal opportunities; or of the international legal frameworks and standards that place certain obligations on governments.
- Therefore, 'majorities' feel threatened and resentful of attempts to create a 'level playing field' for minorities.
- These fears are manipulated by opportunistic politicians.

4. Factors relating to education systems

- There is a great deal of newly developed good practice, but this remains at the pilot or local level and is not scaled up to achieve positive change for the system as a whole.
- Getting the balance right between providing mother-tongue instruction, and ensuring that children can use the majority language well enough to access higher education and work opportunities.
- Teacher training does not routinely prepare teachers to work in diverse classrooms.
- Traditionally, there is an expectation that children will be able to do large amounts of home study. This leads to children in overcrowded housing, or those who work after school falling behind and unable to revise sufficiently for exams (many such children are from minority families).
- Traditional teaching practice relies on instruction and memorizing, rather than active learning, leaving children who are not proficient in the language of instruction very disadvantaged.
- New teaching practices that have been shown to work well in diverse classrooms (multiple intelligences/learning styles approaches), are almost unknown in the region and are not covered in routine teacher-training.
- Traditional approaches to defining 'a minority' are not flexible enough to cope with population changes due to migration or the complexity of many European identities today. Both Hungary and Moldova are interesting examples.

III. TEACHER TRAINING

The group that discussed teacher training suggested that a first step would be to develop and test a core regional teacher-training resource on 'the diverse classroom'. This could form the basis for an initiative to be funded by a regional agency, such as the European Union or the Stability Pact for South-East Europe.

Training teachers in the skills they need to work on in a classroom and/or a community with children of different backgrounds—this idea should be a part of every teacher's training.

Teachers' expectations can affect children's performances in schools. Teachers need to be aware of their own prejudices and how these can affect both their own behaviour and that of the children they teach.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINING

If all teachers embarked on their careers possessing the skills they need to work in an inclusive way with children from diverse backgrounds, the quality of provision for minority children in the region would be improved, The working group recommended that a core regional training module should be developed and tested for initial teacher training on 'diversity and the diverse classroom'. This training module would contain the following elements:

- self-awareness, critical skills to identify stereotyping, awareness of diversity;
- challenges and opportunities presented in diverse classrooms;
- content and delivery of anti-bias curricula;
- approaches and teaching methods for culturally diverse and multilingual classrooms.

In addition to pre-service training in core modules, an in-service training pack needs to be developed and delivered at regional seminars for teachers on 'teaching in a diverse classroom'. The seminars would have the dual aim of giving teachers opportunities to discuss diversity issues within a regional, a European and a national context; as well as providing essential training for teachers

who are teaching minorities now and preparing those who may do so in the future.

Experts from the South-East Europe region would have the task of writing core materials for the teacher training modules. Initially, some international expertise should also be called upon to ensure that best use is made of what has already been developed and tested elsewhere. Materials have also been developed (but not translated) in some countries in the region that could be incorporated. The regional experts would adapt and build on this to develop the regional core package. Materials and delivery would then be tested in different countries to ensure that they are applicable, with small modifications, throughout the region.

To develop teachers' practical skills and capacity, 'exchange and exposure programmes' in schools that have developed successful practice for minority children would be useful. This would be equally important for teachers who work in communities without minorities, who might otherwise have no opportunities to develop teaching skills that they might need later in their careers.

V. LANGUAGE ISSUES

The group that discussed language issues also put forward practical recommendations for approaching these within a regional and wider European context. The working group proposed:

- The possibility of co-operation between countries to lower the costs for individual countries to develop and produce materials for numerically small minorities.
- Learning from the successful efforts of other countries.

In South-East Europe, the debate continues about which languages should be used as mother tongue languages, and which as foreign-languages and in which countries?

In answer to the question 'how long should students study in their mother tongue?' the group could not come up with a 'next step' proposal, but set out the broad principles that they believe should define language policy:

Language/s teaching/mother tongue provision should achieve a balance that ensures the following:

- To see that the abilities of children who are not native speakers of the language used in school are acknowledged and recognized, especially if instruction in their mother-tongue is not possible.
- If mother-tongue provision to children who are not native speakers of the language used in school is not possible, students are therefore provided with other kinds of support so that they can understand what is going on in the classroom.
- Children who receive instruction in their mother-tongue are also taught the majority language to a level that ensures that they can access higher education, employment and other opportunities that require it.

Opportunities for regional learning exist and should be taken advantage of.

- Issues and problems that emerged, but have been resolved, or even just better understood, in other countries offer ideas, signs of hope and inspiration.
- Every country's experience is unique, but we face some common challenges, and other countries in Europe may have faced similar ones in the decades since the idea of a 'kind of United States of Europe' was first proposed in 1946.

The working group was made of representatives from: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Moldova, Romania and Slovenia.

8. Early childhood

Moderators: Marcela Batistič Zorec and Arjana Miljak

I. PRESENTATION BY THE MODERATORS

Mrs. Batistič Zorec presented the differences and similarities in early childhood national curricular documents. She explained how the historical development of pre-school institutions differs from Europe and North America, and even more so in comparison with the former socialist countries. Apart from the Nordic states, countries maintain the division between day care institutions and pre-school education, which is increasingly being questioned by experts. In the former socialist states, high rates of employment among women led to the establishment of a very large number of day care centres, open to children of all ages, but which suffered from high levels of centralization and thus lacked of competition and heterogeneousness.

The fast development of pre-school education had led countries in Western Europe and North America to develop national pre-school curricular documents. Created only recently, these documents present some differences and similarities. In terms of differences, it can be noted that some countries are well advanced in the development and implementation of the new curriculum, while others are barely starting. The programmes have differ-

ent juridical values and can take different forms (framework, guidelines, manuals). The main difference between the documents is the variety of subject areas, and the naming of these areas, although contents are mostly similar. The role of religion is tackled in various ways. Some curricula refer to basic democratic values but never to religion; while in some countries religious values are openly part of the document. National legislation can in some cases restrict, oblige or prohibit religious education.

As for the similarities, all documents include fundamental (democratic) values and foster awareness of multiculturalism due to the increasingly international aspects of communities in many places. Other important values to be encountered in the documents are equal opportunities, gender equality, environment and health. Programmes are overall flexible with little obligation in terms of methods, themes and activities. Furthermore, the aims related to child development and learning represent similarities. Learning is not formal, but based on activities, learning to learn, experience and exploration. The typical pre-school curriculum integrates knowledge and process covering several subjects.

Mrs. Miljak presented recent research she conducted in the field of early childhood education. Starting from the point of view that education of children is under constant development, (in which improvement and modification is a result of direct observation and reflection by researchers and practitioners), she considers the curriculum to be dynamic by referring to it as a *developmental curriculum*. She argues that the key to reform lies in translating theories into educational practices, an aspect which she considers to have been omitted in contemporary research. She calls for a well-developed theory of action, to be based on the local context and culture of each individual institution. An effective translation of innovation into practice is unpredictable and indefinite. This is because one never knows if and how institutions will accept it, and whether a true change in practice will take place. Therefore, she started her research by exploring educational practices, in order to discover what theories or implicit pedagogies are present and performed in institutions in Croatia. Some of the major findings were the following:

- The environment and organization of intuitions are arranged according to a model of adults, and thus in opposition with children's nature and rights. A change is required in the environment, as well as in the relationship of tutors towards children. This relationship is to be based on trust, respect and co-operation.
- A child learns by doing. The research showed that by abandoning the traditional relationship of superiority and subordination, the development of a child is stimulated.
- Heterogeneous age groups are the most suitable group for living and learning in kindergartens. These institutions showed fewer problems related to adapting, establishing confidence and learning rules of living in a group.
- The acceptance of children of ethnic or religious minorities or with special needs depends largely on the attitude of the tutor, whose behaviour and treatment will be followed by the children of the institution.

VI: NATIONAL PLANS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1. Albania

The team representing Albania consisted of: Enina Balili, Mimoza Cano, Ylli Gjançi and Sotir Rapo

The Ministry of Education and Science has undertaken strategic steps in the reform of curricula in the following areas:

1. The design and drafting of new curricula.
2. The design and piloting of content standards for each subject in compulsory education.
3. Teacher training in all regions of the country.
4. The renewal of higher education curricula for pre-service teacher training.
5. Increasing the number of textbooks available for teacher training.

I. THE NEED FOR CURRICULUM CHANGE

Today, Albanian society is open and there is an opportunity to reflect on the prospects in the field of education.

- Certain subjects require scientific and methodological changes.
- Many subjects, such as artistic education, technical education, Albanian language and literature, should be reviewed.
- The socio-economic changes in society have created the need for a transformation of the existing curriculum.
- Certain subjects are overloaded and very academically oriented, and thus do not allow students to develop practical skills.
- Due to its centralized character, some schools are not able to adapt the national curricula to local conditions.
- Issues related to health and environmental education, human rights and peace, the equality of the races, minorities and gender require more thorough reflection within the real context.

These problems have been brought to the attention of the ministry and some changes have been made. The curriculum framework will combine global educational objectives with the goals and objectives of specific subjects, and establish the right ratio between subjects. Some work has been done with regard to pilot-testing of content standards for subjects such as languages, civic education, mathematics and physical education. Some characteristics of the expected primary school curriculum are:

- Broader scope: cognitive, emotional, creative, physical.
- More active learning.
- Lifelong learning supported by the government.
- Cohesion in collaboration (combining internal development and regional development).
- Subject integration.
- High professionalism, good equipment and fair treatment in schools.
- Decentralization of the education system.
- Quality education, in particular internationally comparable standards and the guarantee of recognizing certification and diplomas abroad.

Dilemmas still exist concerning the following issues:

- Teacher preparation in terms of quality and the ability to respond to the new curricula.
- Finding models and adapting them in accordance with the different areas of the curriculum.
- Assistance and professional support responding to our needs and demands
- The establishment of a consensus in the process of redesigning curricula. This requires a close co-operation between the Ministry of Education and Science, the Institute of Research and Pedagogical Studies, the National Centre for Evaluation and examinations, schools, kindergartens, universities, etc.
- It is worth mentioning the phenomenon of 'brain drain' that exists in our country. A certain percentage of teachers, specialists and professors leave to work abroad, leading to difficulties in the education system, especially in terms of the quality of the teaching.

II. FIRST STEPS FOR CHANGE

In pre-primary and primary education, the draft of the core-curriculum is being prepared. Some of the main goals and characteristics of pre-school education are as follows:

- Educating an individual who is free and responsible.
- Developing cognitive and emotional capacities.
- Providing equality of opportunity for all children. Kindergarten is the first and the most important place where the process of social integration of the child begins. It should be an environment that makes the child the centre of attention in the educational process. The kindergarten years influence the general development of the child through well-planned activities.

The new educational programme in our kindergarten activities is classified under the following areas:

1. Civic education. It teaches children to live and interact together.
2. Linguistic development and learning to write. The issues are:

- Development of communication skills and speech.
- Development of skills to listen and understand a conversation.
- Development of correct pronunciation skills.
- Development of descriptive skills.

3. Discovery of oneself and of the surrounding world.
4. Artistic education.
5. Space, dimensions and rules.

III. SOME PROPOSALS

This programme should be accompanied by other activities:

- As part of a regional strategy, to create a draft model of a curriculum comprising main principles to be respected by countries in the region and to be adopted by consensus.
- To broaden exchanges among specialists.
- To establish criteria for a possible agreement on a flexible curriculum to be employed by minorities.
- To establish contacts through the world-wide web.
- To disseminate publications on curriculum issues in the region.

2. Bosnia and Herzegovina

The team representing Bosnia and Herzegovina consisted of: Boris Čekrlija, Melvida Pekmez and Stanislav Pusic

I. CURRENT SITUATION

1. Organizational structure

Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the Republic of Srpska. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has ten cantons, each of which has its proper cantonal Ministry of Education and educational institutions. At the federal level, the Republic of Srpska has a Ministry of Education, while the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has its Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports. The country does not have a national Ministry of Education.

Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina follows three curricula. In the Republic of Srpska, primary and secondary education is uniform and all primary schools follow a common curriculum. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina utilizes two curricula. Therefore, as a result of the Dayton Agreement, according to which education falls under the jurisdiction of entities or cantons, both of the constitutive federations have their own curricula for primary and secondary schools.

II. ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE EDUCATION

In 2001, with technical support provided under the auspices of EC-TAER (European Commission—Technical Assistance to Educational Reform) Project, the 'modernization of primary and general secondary education' was initiated in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Activities for the modernization of curricula and in-service teacher training were carried out, as well as the measures to include learners with special needs or learner-returnees, the improvement of school management and the development of a legal framework. The general impression is that the project has been carried out at a pace that could and should be more rapid.

In the Republic of Srpska, for three years now, three primary schools have had the status of experimental schools. They use a reduced curriculum with modern interactive teaching methods. Starting from the next school year, all primary schools in the Republic of Srpska will apply this new curriculum. The contents of individual subjects have been reduced by about 20%. In-service training (theoretical lectures as well as observations in experimental schools) has been organized for all the primary school-teachers to familiarize them with the new interactive methods of teaching.

III. AGENCY FOR STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

The establishment of the Agency for Standards and Assessment was decided through a common accord by the governments of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska in 2000. The agency is a component of a developmental education project in Bosnia and Herzegovina, supported by the World Bank and the European Commission. It is an independent institution of the governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska that provides specialized expertise and services to educators on various aspects of assessment. It acts as a counselling body for decision-makers in educational policy at secondary levels and, furthermore, it represents public interest by monitoring the provision by which the gov-

ernments of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (and cantons) and the Republic of Srpska implement quality education.

1. Tasks of the agency

The priority task of the agency is to define standards of learning achievements in specific subjects at different levels of education and to assess their degree of achievement. Among its other tasks are:

- Collecting, processing and publishing data on learning quantity and quality in primary and secondary schools. This information is used for the decision-making process (this information is obtained through testing primary and secondary school pupils in certain subjects at a specific level of education).
- Providing assistance to municipalities, cantons and entities in projects dealing with research and the development of assessment in education.
- Providing assistance in the field of research and development of assessment to education institutions and to individuals in the field of assessment (teachers at schools and the staff of educational institutions) through seminars, courses, workshops and working groups.
- Harmonizing assessment practices (priority activity of the agency).

2. Priority activities of the agency

- Inspiring understanding and support of stakeholders (including political bodies, specialists in the field of education and other fields, parents and the general public), so that the objectives of the agency are achieved.
- Carrying out sample assessments in key subjects (mathematics and mother-tongue) at key levels of education (the fourth and the eighth year of primary school). As well as setting the proficiency benchmark of education systems and preparing the manner of obtaining the general grade of learning achievements.
- Analysis of data and publication of reports for the ministry, schools and the general public, as well as for specialist in education and other fields.
- Utilization of existing experience in assessment and the development of additional expertise among teachers in order to enable schools to better assess learning achievements in school subjects and other fields.

The agency will establish partner relationships with the stakeholders providing service and information for:

- entity, cantonal and municipal bodies;
- universities and faculties;
- educational institutions;
- school heads;
- teaching staff councils at schools;
- commercial and industrial enterprises;
- organizations of parents and young people.

3. Bulgaria

The team representing Bulgaria consisted of: Rumiana Mantcheva, Zvetelina Petrova, Deyan Pilev and Zahari Zahariev

Like all countries in the region, Bulgaria is reforming its education system from pre-school to higher education level. This reform is carried out through the 'modernization of education' project and is funded by the World Bank. The reform has to deal with the demographic crisis that Bulgaria is currently facing. This crisis manifests itself in a decrease in the total number of school-going children and a change in the ethnic structure, specifically through an increase of children from minority groups, mainly Roma and Turkish. Therefore, the reform is taking place in the context of a radical socio-economic and political transformation, and aims to integrate the country into the European structure.

I. WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR

- A new curriculum has been adopted, consisting of different cultural/educational areas.
- The curriculum includes 'civic education'—an interdisciplinary subject taught from grades 1 to 12, and introduces a separate subject called 'world and personality' in class 12.
- New State educational standards have been developed for all school subjects, starting from grade 1. They describe the aims and the outcomes of the process of education.
- New study programmes for all subjects have been developed.
- The end of the year 2001 saw the development of a school-leaving examination in two obligatory subjects: Bulgarian language and literature, plus a subject of choice.
- The curriculum regulates early foreign-language learning, starting from grade 2. It will support the integration of minorities into the education system by teaching them Bulgarian language before they start school and through assistance in teacher training for people from minority groups.
- A process of optimization of the school network has started in accordance with the demographic changes in the country. A reform in the area of higher education is underway.

II. MAIN CHALLENGES OF THE EDUCATIONAL REFORM

- Achieving a high level of education by introducing the new curriculum.
- Operationalization of the new curriculum standards at the school and at the classroom level.
- Developing effective pedagogical practices for achieving standards.
- Creating new textbooks and additional educational materials in accordance with the new curriculum.
- Teacher education and training.
- Motivating teachers for active participation in the reform.

Special emphasis has been placed on qualifying teachers in the following areas:

- early foreign-language teaching;
- working with minority groups;
- civic education;
- working with children at risk;
- qualifying teachers for computer sciences and information technologies;
- working out a system of evaluation of student and teacher achievements, as well as for the education system as a whole;
- involvement of young people who have dropped out of the education system;
- last but not least—ensuring the financial support for the reform.

In the process of solving these problems we are looking for partnership and assistance from different international organizations, including CEPS. Finally we would like to thank the organizers of this event who have provided a good opportunity for exchange of ideas and experiences between countries of the region, thus being a helpful and reliable partner.

III. PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER ACTIVITIES

- To establish discussion groups on the world-wide web, where every country would suggest 'hot' themes to be discussed. The posed problems could be preceded by short research on the topic in individual countries. This will give SEE-ECN an opportunity to become a regional discussion forum in the field of education.
- To establish a new South-East European Countries joint column on the website.
- To present ways of harmonizing educational legislation in individual countries with European legislation in a new joint column on the website.
- To ensure more content information in already existing columns on the website.

4. Croatia

The team representing Croatia consisted of: Petar Bezinovic, Petra Hoblaj, Milvija Markovic, Iris Marusic, Milan Matijevic, Arjana Miljak, Vera Turkovic and Vlasta Vizek Vidovic

I. THE STATUS OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM

The need for educational reform in Croatia is widely recognized by different stakeholders. The issues related to the reform are the focus of public interest and are receiving wide media coverage. Professional audiences are actively involved in the debate at various levels.

The general framework for educational reform is presented in two strategic documents drafted by two independent expert groups. One of them is part of the general strategy 'Croatia in the twenty-first Century', sponsored by the Croatian government; the other document was designed by a group of experts appointed by the Ministry of Education and Sports. An interdisciplinary team of investigators from the Institute for Social Research in Zagreb has started research projects related to the key elements of the reform: such as the duration of compulsory education; curriculum reform; reform of teacher training; and the establishment of a model for external and internal evaluation of schools. The results of these projects are intended to serve as an empirical basis for decisions related to educational policy.

Public discussion about the documents is underway and is converging on key concepts. At the same time, hidden reforms are taking place at the school level. Many teachers have actively participated in various types of in-service training, such as workshops and seminars related to new teaching methods. By attending these, the teachers enrich their daily work with new teaching practices.

II. CURRICULUM REFORM PROBLEMS

Curriculum reform is at an initial stage. An increasing awareness concerning the need for educational reform exists, but no document describing a national curriculum framework has been developed, neither has any official body been appointed for this purpose. The Institute for School Development has started a large campaign aimed at needs assessment in different subject areas, and the institute's professionals are working on downsizing the

overloaded school plans and programmes. The Centre for Educational Research and Development (ISRZ) has also proposed a policy-oriented research on curriculum development that should be carried out in close co-operation with the Institute for School Development. However, practical steps to launch curricular reform have not been undertaken yet.

III. CURRICULAR REFORM NEEDS

The needs for curricular reform are mainly related to expert input. As there are no educational professionals specialized in the area of curricular design, support is needed in human resources development in the area of curriculum design. This should include both mentorship to the educational specialists engaged in the work on curricular reform in the country, as well as training and study visits to foreign institutions specialized in curriculum planning and evaluation of the education system. Also, both educational researchers and practitioners need expert and advisory consultations in curriculum development. Furthermore, the lack of financial resources could seriously endanger efforts aimed at large-scale curricular reform of the education system in Croatia.

IV. MAIN ISSUES IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

First of all, there is a need to design a work plan for the development of new curricula. The main educational goals derived from the child-centred approach should be decided upon. Furthermore, objectives should be determined with regard to learning outcomes. Key steps, including the planning, designing, implementing and evaluating of new curricula, should be defined.

V. PROPOSALS FOR THE FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

There are several areas of activity that could facilitate the launch of curricular reform in Croatia:

- To open dialogue in order to achieve consensus between educational professionals and policy makers regarding the needs and priorities in changing the education system.
- To support policy-oriented research that assesses current status and needs.
- To build capacity in the field through in-service teacher education.
- To carry out parallel upgrading of contents and methodology of teaching/learning processes through in-service teacher education.

VI. VALUE OF SEE-ECN

The SEE-ECN network is a meeting place for various approaches and initiatives related to common problems in educational reform in the countries of South-East Europe. The network can offer foreign expertise and different perspectives related to various difficulties of educational reform. Furthermore, the SEE-ECN offers a valuable opportunity for the exchange of experiences in the region. Also, there is an opportunity for in-depth problem analysis in thematic sessions. The library of documents is a particularly valuable resource of materials on key topics concerning curricular reform.

5. Kosovo

The team representing Kosovo consisted of: Ljuljeta Belegu Demjaha, Deme Hoti, Halim Hyseni, Ganimete Kulinxha, Ramush Lekaj, Besa Pupa, Remzi Salihu and Ramadan Zejnullahu

I. COUNTRY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Kosovo area: 10,908 km².
- Population in 1991: 2,105,000 inhabitants; Population under 15 years: 41%.
- Ethnic groups: Albanian over 90%, Serbians 7%, Bosnians, Turks and others 2%.
- Education (in five different languages: Albanian, Serbian, Bosnian, Turkish, Croatian).
- Total number of schools: 1,163.
- Total number of students: 410,485.
- 37 preschools with 7,343 pupils.
- 985 primary schools (grades 1-8) with 320,844 students.
- 127 secondary schools with 90,507 students.
- 14 special schools with 503 students.
- 1 university with 886 teachers and 20,155 students.
- Culture: 8 museums, 2 professional theatres, 5 amateur theatres.

The administration of education is based on the UN Resolution 1244. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MASHT) was established after central elections had taken place and is responsible for the administration of education at the central level.

II. THE CURRICULUM PROCESS

In order to develop a comprehensive educational reform, the Department of Education and Science (DoES/UNMIK) introduced its so-called 'leading

agency strategy' in 2000. Different organizations have been invited to support and deal with specific areas of reform of the educational process:

- UNICEF Kosovo (psycho-social development, early childhood, curriculum development);
- CIDA-KEDP (teacher training);
- GTZ (vocational education and training);
- World Bank-FTP (assessment and evaluation);
- Helsinki Group (special needs education).

At the end of 2000, UNICEF-Kosovo was invited to act as a leading agency for curriculum development, and committed itself to supporting three main activities of the curriculum reform process:

- The development of a new curriculum framework, determining the key orientations for a sustainable reform of the curriculum.
- Increasing quality and equality in the education system based on progressive learning, aims and objectives, contents, methodology of teaching and learning, procedures of assessment and evaluation (November 2000–September 2001).
- The development of new guidelines for pre-school education and a new curriculum for primary education.

Based on UNICEF-Kosovo rules, the process of curriculum development is designed for citizens from Kosovo. The Core Curriculum Team (CCT) that was established within the DoES, gave priority to the development of a New Kosovo Curriculum Framework (NKCF). UNICEF-Kosovo, as the leading agency, supported the process in both professional and financial aspects. In December 2000, UNESCO-IBE organized an intensive course on general curriculum development for CCT, and in March 2001 an international counsellor assisted CCT in finalizing the NKCF. An international seminar on 'case studies in curriculum development', jointly organized by DoES, UNICEF and IBE-UNESCO took place in Prishtina from 2 to 5 May 2001. More than seventy people, representing teachers, students, headmasters, educational authorities, leading agencies and education NGOs, as well as experts from IBE-UNESCO and six European countries (Estonia, Ireland, Lithuania, Norway, Romania, Spain/Catalonia) attended the seminar. A complete report of the seminar activities and outcomes can be consulted on the IBE-UNESCO website (www.ibe.unesco.org). A wide public discussion on the different phases of development of the NKCF was also organized.

In September 2001, a 'white paper' in Albanian, Serbian, Turkish and English was launched for discussions by the public. For six months, teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders in education were invited to give their feedback in order to improve the document. (For more information in Albanian, Serbian or English: www.see-educop.net.) This document is currently (April 2002) being approved by the Ministry of Education.

The second phase, i.e. the development of new guidelines for pre-school education and a new curriculum for primary education, scheduled for March-December 2002, has been interrupted until the new ministry has received feedback from the public discussions concerning the NKCF in order to finalize the document.

We hope that the curriculum development process of Kosovo presents a valuable experience not only to Kosovars, but also to all countries of the Balkans region. The NKCF is a unique document, and is the first of its kind in the region. As the most important document of curriculum policy, it will be a base for the development of subject curricula, new orientations for assessment and evaluation, and for the renewal of teaching and learning. We hope it will influence organizational work at schools and improve relationships between the school and the community.

6. FYR Macedonia

The team representing FYR Macedonia consisted of: Natasha Angeloska Galevska, Lena Damovska, Jasmina Delceva Dizdarevic and Olga Samardzic

Educational reform in FYR Macedonia, which started in the early 1990s, was aimed at designing a new curriculum that is flexible and more process-oriented than content-oriented.

In pre-school education new curricular models, such as step-by-step, active learning, and thematic planning, were introduced recently. During the last two years there have been intensive activities for the development of a new national curriculum regulating the work of kindergartens. This new curriculum is characterized by:

- An improved working methodology (integrated curriculum with emphasized developmental tasks for children between six months and 7 years). It refers to all developmental aspects, particularly to children's rights.
- Abandoning cognitive and academic orientations in pre-school institutions, the so-called 'scholarization'.
- A developmental curriculum that is continuously renewed.
- Increasing the number of children at pre-school institutions, especially in the year before they enter primary school (currently about 27% of the age cohort attend).
- Improvement of initial training for tutors.

In 1995, the new Primary Education Act was adopted and pilot projects for primary education advancement were initiated. Among such projects was 'active learning/teaching', based on the promotion of interactive learning, which brought changes to the classroom itself, as well as to the methods and organization of teaching. In 1996, the national reform of primary education started. This reform began at Form 1 (in 1996), and has been implemented in each succeeding form in subsequent years. In 2001, it reached Form 6.

Apart from core subjects, for the first time the new curriculum introduces electives and optional subjects. Optional subjects are foreign languages in the fourth form, and foreign languages and information and computer science in the seventh and eight forms. Elective subjects in the first cycle (Forms 1-4) are: ecology, handicraft, and minority group languages, and in the second cycle (Forms 5-8): art, music, sport, traffic and transportation.

The reform of secondary and higher education introduced a credit transfer system.

New course books have also been produced, and the teachers, for the first time ever, have an option to select the course book they consider most appropriate for their syllabus. The course books, besides the selected content, also include didactic suggestions on how to teach certain topics.

Together with the implementation of reform, a Department for Evaluation was established, which performs external evaluations on learning achievements in two school subjects, mother tongue (FYR Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish) and mathematics.

Another aspect of the reform concerns teacher training. Difficulties have been encountered in providing in-service training, because it lies within the competencies of the Ministry of Education and the Bureau for Educational Development. In-service training thus far only includes a few seminars and addresses a limited number of teachers.

The reformed curriculum can partially solve certain problems, but as we all know, a reform is a process, not an act.

7. Moldova

The team representing Moldova consisted of: Anatol Gremalschi, Viorica Postica and Nadejda Velisco

I. OVERVIEW

The Republic of Moldova is going through an unprecedented period of transition. Educational reform is part of the structural transformations characterizing this process and what is happening is therefore different from what is typical of education systems in more stable societies. The re-organization of education in Moldova aims at, on the one hand, ensuring the organization and functioning of the education system according to social and cultural identity; and, on the other hand, solving the curricula dysfunction that has come to light at this time. Conceptually, curricular reform is a central component and, at the same time, the guarantee of success for global reform of national education.

The goal of the reform is to mark the final separation of the education system from the uniform and rigid model of the past. Curricular reform is expected to respond adequately to the unprecedented changes and challenges of this century. The most important regulatory acts of the reform that have been created during the last couple of years are:

- The concept of educational development in the Republic of Moldova.
- The law of education of the Republic of Moldova.
- The national programme for educational development of the Republic of Moldova (1995–2005).
- The review of all secondary school subjects.
- The concept of education (draft).
- The concept of assessment (draft).
- New documents: curricular descriptions, new textbooks, the concept of teacher training, new assessment of students' outcomes, etc.

The elements of the national curricula are the following:

- The basic curricula (reference framework).
- A timetable for education in secondary school.
- Discipline curricula.
- Guides for the implementation of the new curricula.
- Textbooks and guides for the implementation of textbooks for teachers.
- Policy trends in curriculum reform with regard to school autonomy.

Significant administrative changes have resulted in greater autonomy for educational institutions. The Ministry of Education determines the compulsory subjects (80%), while the optional subjects (15-20%) are left for schools to determine. Decisions regarding optional subjects depend to a great extent on the skills and initiative of the school staff, as well as the school environment.

II. DRAFTING NEW CURRICULA

The first innovations in the development of Moldova's new educational curriculum, in terms of its contents and structure, started in 1991. Between 1992 and 1995, new curricula for pre-school and primary education were developed. This process involved the participation of many educationists and researchers, and resulted in the elaboration of a draft version for public discussion. Once the National Council of Curriculum and Assessment and the Council of the Ministry of Education accepted the new curriculum, implementation began in the autumn of 1996, with the support of new textbooks and teachers' guides. In 1997 the process of development of the new curricula for grades 5 to 9 (gymnastics) and grades 10 to 12 (lyceum, secondary school) was concluded.

After public discussion on each subject with specialists and teachers, the National Council of Curriculum and Assessment accepted the curriculum, and the Ministry of Education prescribed its implementation in grade 5, starting in the school year 2000. The process of implementation of the new curricula for grades 5 to 6 is currently being developed for all subjects with new textbooks, and will be continued in the years to come. The curricula for grades 10 to 12 were elaborated and implemented in accordance with new requirements for drafting curricula and timetable guidelines.

The Ministry of Education, the Department of Secondary Schools, the regional and local administration of education and the Institute of Education are in charge of the implementation of curricula and new textbooks.

All subjects of the curricula are translated into the languages of the minority populations (Russian, Bulgarian, Ukrainian, etc.)

Today, the new curriculum has been elaborated for all stages of education: pre-school, elementary, gymnasium and lyceum. This has led to the need for a new university psycho-pedagogical curriculum, a document to be applied in the second year of high school.

III. INNOVATING NEW CURRICULA

- The accent is put on what is learned by the student (increased volume of information), rather than what is presented by the teacher.
- The study process is orientated towards capacities and attitudes, with use of active didactical strategies.
- The education system is structured for the individual student.
- Study content has been directed towards the everyday reality, towards students' interests and capacities, and towards a society based on a market economy.
- The selection criteria of content is based on quality rather that quantity.

IV. PROBLEMS IN DRAFTING NEW CURRICULA

- Old textbooks and teaching materials were still used during the implementation phase of the new curriculum in pre-school, elementary school and the lyceum. Teacher training in the use of the new curricula was delayed and insufficient.
- The continuity between the pre-school and the elementary curricula was not sufficiently ensured.
- There have been difficulties in monitoring curriculum implementation due to the lack of skills in the planning and implementation of monitoring schemes.
- The new assessment system needs to be granted autonomy from the decision-making bodies and requires supplementary financing.
- Not all institutions that provide teacher-training programmes (especially for elementary and gymnasium teachers) have adjusted the content and methodology of training to the new curricula.
- Textbook authors and potential material developers have a great need for professional development. Only a few training initiatives were provided in this area.

V. LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

- Curricula reform in grades 1 to 9 was supported by the World Bank.
- The pre-school curriculum was supported by UNICEF.
- The lyceum curriculum was supported by the Educational Centre Pro Didactica, (a subsidiary of the Soros Foundation).
- The Educational Centre Pro Didactica conducted a qualitative 'step by step' evaluation programme for pre-school and elementary education.

According to the teachers, the strong elements of the new curriculum are:

- Its orientation towards objectives; their precise and concrete formulation.
- Making the objectives operational.
- Stress is placed on 'what you can do' rather than on 'what you know'.
- Multiple possibilities for stimulating creativity.
- A set of advanced didactic technologies.
- Orientation towards the pupil and to the applied, pragmatic aspect of the disciplines.
- The interdependence between teaching/learning/evaluation.
- Promotion of a new vision on evaluation.

The (qualitative/quantitative) changes noted by the teachers as a result of implementing the new curricula are the following:

1. In the activities of the teacher
- freedom in selecting the contents;
- creativity, flexibility;
- the necessity for the continuous improvement of teachers;
- the teacher needs more time to prepare lessons;
- the teacher may become confused when there is difficulty in implementing the new contents and an impediment to using old methods;
- the increasing role of self-education, using different forms of improvement.

2. In the behaviour of the pupils
- freedom of thinking and expression;
- increased activity, more implication;
- less inhibited, more able to defend their own opinions;
- collaboration with colleagues;
- more creativity;
- more responsibility;

Among the many suggestions offered by the teachers for improvement of the curriculum and its implementation, the following ideas may be underlined:
- More thought should be given to formulating the objectives.
- The need to prepare adequate manuals and additional didactic materials.
- The need to provide libraries with the necessary literature.
- The need to improve the evaluation system.
- The need to improve teachers' qualifications.
- More methodical indications and publication of manuals in time.

More concrete suggestions will be formulated after implementing this curriculum after five or six years.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

We consider that the preparation, editing and approval of the entire set of new curricula, comprising complex and innovative documents, represents a success for educational reform in the country. Providing content that is free of politics and ideology and providing choices in the selection of topics constitutes an important and attractive feature of this curriculum. The fact that teachers and pupils have accepted it and are aware of the changes indicates progress. The fact that it is synchronized with the experience of other advanced countries has, in our opinion, an enormous significance.

The specialists implicated in the curricular reform almost unanimously were of the opinion that the documents, at the initial stage, where too detailed for them to be easily used (e.g. the elementary school curriculum: 474 pages; the lyceum curriculum: 3 books for 3 curricula areas of 115, 157 and 180 pages respectively). To increase their functionality, the curriculum should concentrate on general recommendations and the frame of activities while operational objectives and models of evaluation can be included in other didactic materials.

Even if some improvements have been made, a lot remains to be done. It has been accepted, for instance, that the learning objectives at all levels have been overambitious and will thus be difficult to attain. The problem of reducing and merging the content of each curricular component therefore remains to be accomplished. Also, a considerable effort is needed to avoid the excessive overloading of content with scientific units. A change in the mentality of the authors of the curriculum and in the mind of the teachers is also needed.

Finally, in an austere society with a tradition of restricted access to information, whatever the performances of the curriculum as a normative document would be, there cannot be a true and realistic success of the reform without the support of manuals and other didactic materials. After a period of four or five years of printing new, reviewed and improved documents, no more funding is available. Therefore, although textbook development is part of the activities planned by the ministry, its implementation might be compromised.

VII. OUR PROPOSALS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

- To create a regional centre for curricular resources and comparative studies in the field of curriculum development.
- To implement a common methodology for curriculum assessment and knowledge assessment.
- To harmonize national legislation in the field of minority education.
- To conduct teacher training activities in the following fields:
  - education for tolerance in a multi-cultural environment;
  - conflict management, prevention and resolution;
  - post-conflict rehabilitation.

1. The value of an education co-operation network

- Access to information databases in the targeted areas.
- To share experiences in dealing with similar challenges in the diverse contexts within the region, for instance, in evaluating new curricula.

2. Activities that can be provided by the network

- To establish an on-line consulting process, with technical assistance from well-known international educational experts acting as counsellors.
- To organize co-operative activities (conferences, workshops, etc.) focused on the specific needs of participating countries.

8. Montenegro

The Team representing Montenegro consisted of: Tatjana Novovic, Natasa Zivkovic, Miodrag Vuceljic, Perko Vukotic and Slobodan Backovic

I. OVERVIEW

The educational reform process in Montenegro began a few years ago, from the grass roots level, through various projects sponsored by donor organizations, like the British Council, UNICEF, OSI Montenegro, etc. These projects aimed at introducing new teaching and learning methods and materials, as well as at building a climate of tolerance and in favour of finding peaceful solutions to problems in schools; thus enhancing co-operation within schools and between schools and the local community. One of the most important efforts was the European Union's 'OBNOVA' project, which dealt with elementary education.

However, systemic changes started at the initial stages of the reform strategy and resulted in the adoption of the Book of Changes (i.e. a White Paper) in December 2001. The first phase of the educational reform consisted of the preparation of draft laws to be submitted to parliament for adoption. The second phase consisted of the actual curricula reform at pre-school, elementary, secondary and adult education levels. In order to provide a solid basis for consistent work on curricula revision, the government established a Council for the Curricula, composed of twenty-nine members from all levels of education. In its four-year mandate, the duties of the council are as follows:

- To prepare and adopt the overall content and methodological framework for the development of the new curricula for pre-school education, elementary, secondary and adult education.
- Establish commissions: for the development of the new curricula; for different segments of the education system; for subjects and subject areas. Establish study groups for the evaluation of the draft versions of the new curricula.
- Prepare and adopt a plan and dynamics for the work of the commissions and study groups and co-ordinate their work.
- Discuss the draft versions of the new curricula prepared by the commissions and encourage their adoption.
- Organize seminars and other forms of training for the members of the commission, as well as other professionals participating in the development and evaluation of the curricula.
- Perform other duties and activities aimed at the improvement of curricula.

So far, the council has formed five commissions for different levels of education; it has adopted the work plan for 2002; prepared the draft version of the general guidelines for curriculum development; and is working on specific guidelines for each level of education. The main problem the council faces in its work is the lack of institutional support. At present, in Montenegro there is no educational institute or other specialized institution engaged in pedagogical research with the ability to offer expert assistance in curriculum revision. Therefore, local capacity-building in curriculum revision and development is one of the most urgent needs the council is faced with. Furthermore, the strategy of implementation envisages parallel teacher training in order to familiarize teachers with the content and methodology of the new curricula.

9. Romania

The team representing Romania consisted of: Liliana Preoteasa, Ligia Sarivan and Antoaneta-Firuta Tacea

I. STATUS OF THE EDUCATIONAL REFORM

After eight years of various curricular changes, Romania started implementing a coherent national curriculum in 1998. The main features of the national curriculum are the following:

- To provide equal opportunities for education through a core-curriculum.
- To offer flexibility for local decision-making by leaving room for a school-based curriculum.
- To focus on students' acquisition of learning while designing a curriculum centred on objectives and competencies.
- To aim at integrating knowledge and skills by grouping the traditionally separated school subjects into curricular areas.
- To introduce curricular key-stages according to age (the 'psychological' age in particular) in order to rationalize the level at which students acquire learning.

The new curriculum was implemented as follows: 1998—grades 1–5; 1999—grades 6–9; 2000—grade 10; 2001—grade 11; grade 12 was scheduled to be introduced in schools starting in September 2002.

In order to help the implementation, the following activities were carried out:

- Publication of the official curriculum: The Curriculum Framework, Framework of Reference for Compulsory Education, The Competence Derivation Model, Subject curricula for all school levels.
- Publication of methodological guides to support teachers in adapting their methodology to a student-centred curriculum (thirty-one guides were published for all school subjects/curricular areas for all school levels).
- Publication of alternative textbooks.
- Teacher training: about 7,000 teachers from all over Romania, representing all subjects taught in the new curriculum, attended interactive courses at national level between April 2000 and February 2002.

II. PROBLEMS AND NEEDS

1. Within the project of pre-university education reform co-financed by the World Bank and the Romanian Government, an impact study of the curricular reform was carried out in 2001. The study, developed by an external expert team and based on a national sample, revealed that a critical mass of teachers is favourable to the new curriculum. The teachers that were interrogated pointed to the following needs:
   - more room for the school-based curriculum within the curriculum framework;
   - more teacher training on school improvement issues;
   - a less loaded curriculum;
   - better textbooks focused on a student-centred approach.

2. According to the Law of Education, the ninth grade will be included in compulsory education. For the time being, a debate on how to implement this change was launched, but no decisions have been made so far.

II. KEY CONTENT ISSUES AND DIRECTIONS

The impact study mentioned above was followed by an educational forum that gathered together teachers, inspectors, decision-makers, curriculum experts, university professors and researchers who debated on the outcomes of the study. Consequently, a set of guidelines for future actions was developed:

- more time provision was made for the school-based curriculum within the curriculum framework;
- the objectives were better defined;
- essential syllabi were clearly stated;
- a compulsory ninth-grade should be coherently designed, so as to conclude general education and to orient students towards the various strands of high school;
- pre-vocational guidance in the key-stages of orientation (grades 7 to 9);
- curricular revision and gradual implementation of the revised form in 2002–07;
- the introduction of a pilot project so as to include the final year of kindergarten into compulsory education (starting in 2002/03);
- reform of initial teacher training as well as improving strategies for in-service teacher training.

IV. PROPOSALS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

To develop guidelines for designing curricular materials at a regional level (through seminars) on various issues, such as:

- history of the Balkans;
- literature of the Balkans;
- civics and social studies;
- teacher training, etc.

V. ACTIVITIES TO BE PROVIDED BY THE NETWORK

We recommend a number of activities to be carried out on line, such as:

- To organize materials on the web by themes rather than by country. Possible themes include: mathematics, languages, social studies, minorities, teacher training, etc.
- To set up online discussion groups for each of the themes presented. Thus the network might become a live forum of debate for each of the issues considered important for curriculum design.

10. Serbia

The team representing Serbia consisted of: Vera Bojovic, Ljiljana Djuric, Emina Hebib, Tinde Kovacs Cerovic, Gaso Knezevic, Ljiljana Levkov, Jasmina Moskovljevic and Biljana Stojanovic

We wish to take this opportunity and express our gratitude to the organizers and hosts for making a great effort in arranging for such an inspiring meeting concerning curricula. The data, plans and suggestions, significant from the point of view of systemic, functional and qualitative educational changes in Serbia and other parts of the region, are a central and continuing topic of education. We also wish to express our hopes that this meeting will mark the beginning of a process of continuous, active and fruitful co-operation in the region and beyond.

I. EDUCATIONAL REFORM IN SERBIA

During 2001 and 2002, Serbia has worked to develop the general strategy of educational reform, which was published in the document *Quality education for all: towards a developed society*. To deal with the reform process, the Ministry of Education and Sport of the new government of the Republic of Serbia slightly altered its organizational structure. This was done on the basis of co-ordinated work of expert teams and as a result of a widely based consultation process, which, through a series of debates on reform carried out in sixty-five cities and towns throughout Serbia, included major stakeholders in education (teachers, learners, parents, school principals, school board members local educational authority representatives, with a total number of 8,500 participants). Strategic objectives and the education reform plan have been presented and discussed, amongst other occasions, at two large international conferences held in Belgrade in June 2001 and January 2002, which assembled more than a 1,000 participants, mainly educators and representatives of interest groups in education.

At the moment the reform scene in Serbia has the following characteristics:

- The expert teams assigned by the ministry during the second half of 2001 continue their work with an emphasis on designing implementation programmes.
- New expert teams are assigned for special needs education, curricular reform and textbook publishing policies.
- A national forum for education for all in the Republic of Serbia (sponsored by UNESCO) has been established. Its sphere of activity has been defined and the design of its action programme is in progress.
- The first phase of changes in the law has resulted in the adoption of annexes and changes to the law on elementary and secondary school, and the so-called transitional law on universities.
- Current priorities in the system are the functional and professional refreshing of schools as part of the concept of school development and professionalization of teaching and management at schools. The common denominator of all these activities is improving the quality of the process and results at all levels of the system.
- Developing potentials for co-operation and continuous communication among experts and expert teams, as well as stakeholders and representatives of key interests in education, have stimulated exchanges and granted a good basis and support for reform. Because of uncertainties with regard to social consensus, ensuring such a co-operation was one of the priorities of the Ministry of Education and Sport.
- The principle of inclusion, which was employed through a widely based consultative process, proved to be both justified and effective.

II. PROBLEMS AND NEEDS CONCERNING CURRICULAR REFORMS

Like a large number of transitional countries with similar educational traditions, we find ourselves confronted by challenges involving major conceptual changes. A conceptual framework for the curriculum is gradually replacing the 'plan-and-programme' paradigm. During the debates on the reform, we noted a series of suggestions and initiatives referring to the concept of *curriculum*, rather than to plan and programme. The debates further emphasized general recommendations for the development of the new curriculum, such as:

- A clear identification of subject and cross-curricular content.
- Profiling obligatory, elective and facultative segments of study programmes.
- Providing conditions for the inclusion of extra-curricular content in educational programmes.
- An orientation towards processes instead of towards content.

The debates on reform also indicated the need for curricular concepts of education and schoolwork that were oriented towards intuitive and aesthetic characteristics and were also original, rather than being solely based on professional attributes. This had a major influence on the issues and created problems for developing and designing professional training material for teaching and non-teaching educational experts. It resulted in adapting programmes to fit curricular contexts that also represented priority aspects of planning reform moves in the curricular sphere for:

- professional (in-service) training and basic education for teachers;
- professional advancement and new professional teaching domains (e.g. an expert for designing educational programmes);
- and other professional functions in the system (e.g. managing and supervision).

We believe that one part of this complex problem has to be solved in the context of higher education reforms. Nevertheless, a significant part of training could be carried out through seminars, since a large number of our teachers have taken part in training programmes in the past ten years, conducted by various non-governmental and international organizations active in our region.

III. THE DIRECTION FOR CURRICULUM RE-DESIGN

We conclude that:

- Curricular reform, not only implies a change in curricular content, but also a structural and functional change of that content; a change in working methods and in educational practice; a change in ways of thinking about basic and practical issues of educational processes; a change in the estimation of its effects and results—basically a transition from the paradigm of teaching-plan-and-programme, to the paradigm of an educational programme, implying a complete distinct format.
- This process implies a significant change in focus, which is neither crucially nor exclusively linked to teaching content, but refers to flexibility in selecting, organizing and presenting content, quality of the process and its results—basically continuous efforts towards *quality* in all aspects and at all levels of the system.
- Many aspects point to the fact that the education system provides a good and favourable context for changes of this type to take place, and that their timing, content and other aspects need to be very carefully planned, especially the implementation packages, which ensure that reforms flow in the correct direction.

IV. FOLLOW UP

- Regular meetings, such as the one in Bohinj, should be organized with a concrete and comprehensive agenda in order to ensure continuous information exchange and consultations throughout the region. These meetings contribute to qualified and informed decision-making, both on a strategic and a practical level.
- To establish a mechanism for regular reporting on events and changes in educational systems within the region, as well as on transformations that countries may experience. This would involve practically all European and many other countries. It would be particularly useful if these reports contained crucial information on evaluation methods, procedures and criteria.
- To continue to translate curricula into different languages of the region.

V. THE ADVANTAGES OF AN EDUCATIONAL NETWORK

We largely support the existence of such a network as a place, no matter how virtual, where experiences could be exchanged, both favourable and unfavourable, and where new and necessary information can be obtained. We suggest improving the quality of the existing site, making content more easily accessible in order to obtain responses, suggestions and experiences in a more efficient manner.

Annex I: Background readings

I. SELECTED DOCUMENTS ACCORDING TO WORKSHOP THEMES

GROUPS A & B: Designing and approving new curricula; curriculum, quality and evaluation

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Slovenia – Expertise and Theory:*
  Slavko Gaber: ***The decade of change***
  Language: English, Serbian, Romanian and Albanian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Common SEE Issues*
  Gábor Halász: ***Educational change and social transition in Hungary***
  Language: English, Serbian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Common SEE Issues*
  Strategies of educational reform in SEE countries
  Proceedings of the seminar; Bled/Slovenia, June 8-10, 2000,
  (A) p. 55-68, Ivan Svetlik and Andreja Barle Lakota:
  Curricular reform: the case of Slovenia
  Language: English, Serbian, Romanian and Albanian
  (B) p. 75-81, Bachmann, Helmut:
  Evaluation and assessment of inaugurated change
  Language: English, Serbian, Romanian and Albanian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Theory and Expertise*
  Stronach, Ian; et al. (ed.): *Ways towards Quality in Education*,
  Brdo pri Kranju/Slovenia, 8-10 April 2000,
  (C) p. 27-37, Ian Stronach:
  Quality is the key, but is education the lock? Turning education around through quality procedures.
  Language: English, Serbian, Romanian and Albanian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany - Reviews and Reports*
  European commission: European report on the quality of school education
  Language: English, French, German

GROUP C: Social sciences

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Curriculum*
  Kerr, David: ***Citizenship education in the curriculum: an international review***
  Language: English, Serbian, Romanian, Albanian
  Haydon, Graham: ***The moral agenda of citizenship education***
  Language: English, Croatian, Romanian, Albanian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Theory and Expertise*
  Audigier, François:
  Basic concepts and core competencies for education for democratic citizenship
  Language: English, Romanian, Serbian, Albanian
- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany - Good practices*
  Nemer Frayha:
  Curriculum and social cohesion in a divided society: The case of Lebanon—abstract
  Language: English, Croatian, Albanian

GROUP D: Mathematics

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Curriculum*
  Mathematics – the national curriculum of England
  Language: English, Albanian, Romanian, Bosnian
  Mathematics – curriculum of Italy
  Language: Italian, Albanian
  Mathematics – curriculum of Hungary
  Language: English, Albanian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Slovenia – Curriculum*
  Mathematics – grade 1st to 9th (Slovenia)
  Language: Slovenian, Albanian

GROUP E: Literacy and language policy

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Curriculum*
  Piet Van de Craen:
  Individual plurilingualism and societal multilingualism in an official bilingual environment in a trilingual country: Belgian language education in a historical and European perspective
  Language: English, Serbian, Albanian, Romanian
  Language teacher training and bilingual education. Thematic network project in the area of languages, work group 6 'language teacher training and bilingual education' (1996-1999). A report on activities sponsored by the european commission.
  Language: English, Serbian, Albanian, Romanian
  Pluralingualism in multilingual Europe. European year of languages, Berlin, 28-30 June 2001. Workshop report multilingual education
  Language: English, Serbian, Albanian, Romanian
  Content and language integrated learning, culture of education and learning theories
  Language: English, Serbian, Albanian, Romanian
- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Expertise and Theory*
  Geri Smyth:
  The intercultural dimension in foreign language teaching and learning
  Language: English, Slovenian

GROUP F: Teacher education

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany - Good practice*
  Sybil Wilson:
  Initial teacher education in Canada: the practicum
  Language: English
- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Policy Documents*
  Buchberger, B.P. Campos, D. Kallos, J. Stephenson (eds.):
  Green paper on teacher education in Europe
  Language: English, Serbian, Slovenian
- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany - Reviews and Reports*
  ETUCE: ***Teacher education in Europe, Brussel 1995***
  Language: English

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Theory and Expertise*
  Hytönen, Juhani et al. (ed.): *Teacher Education for Changing School:*
  Juhani Hytönen: ***Emphasizing education as an individual task***
  Language: English, Romanian, Albanian, Serbian
  Geri Smyth: ***Teaching younger children***
  Language: English, Romanian, Albanian, Serbian
  Margareth Drakenberg, Juhani Hytönen, Cveta Razdevšek Pučko, Geri Smyth:
  Postgraduate studies for classroom teachers - comparative study
  Language: English, Romanian, Albanian, Serbian, Macedonian

GROUP G: Minorities and curriculum

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany - Policy Documents*
  OSI, Institute for Educational Policy, Budapest:
  Breaking the spiral: a Roma education initiative
  Language: English
  OSI, Institute for Educational Policy, Budapest:
  Multicultural education and the education of minority pupils
  Language: English

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany - Policy Documents*
  'Denied A Future' Conference; Budapest, November 28-30, 2001:

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Francesca Gobbo: ***Your chance to ask***
Language: English, Croatian
Max Moulton: ***Clayton Park Junior High: a school for diverse learners***
Language: English, Croatian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany - Policy Documents*
  Save the children, UK: denied a future?
  Language: English, selected chapters also in Albanian, Serbian

GROUP H: Early childhood

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Slovenia – Curriculum documents*
  Curriculum for kindergartens (Slovenia)
  Language: Slovenian, Albanian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Miscellany – Curriculum documents*
  Preschool curriculum (Sweden)
  Language: English, Albanian, Croatian,
  Framework plan for day care institutions (Norway)
  Language English, Romanian, Serbian, Albanian

2. SELECTED CURRICULAR DOCUMENTS OF THE SEE COUNTRIES ON SEE-ECN SITE

ALBANIA

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Albania - Reviews and Reports*
  Dhamo, Milka:
  Education policy in education for democratic citizenship and the management of diversity in South-East Europe: stocktaking research project country report: Albania
  Language: English, Serbian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Albania – Curriculum*
  Dautaj, A. et al.:
  Teacher's book on civic education subject: detailed annual plan according to grades for the content standards of civic education (examples), grades 1-8
  Language: English

- *Search under: SEE-ENC – Albania – Curriculum*
  Kamani, Vera & Mato, Erleta:
  Preschool standards and curriculum framework in Albania
  Language: English, Albanian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Shqipëria – Kurrikula - Shqip*
  Curricular documents in Albanian language.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Bosnia and Herzegovina – Reviews and Reports*
  OECD: ***Thematic reviews of national policies for education (p. 20)***
  Language: English, French

BULGARIA

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Bulgaria - Reviews and Reports*
  Atanasova, Lyudmila:
  Project on ethnic relations, the Roma in Bulgaria: collaborative efforts between local authorities and nongovernmental organizations
  Language: English
- *Search under: SEE-ECN - България - Учебна програма - Български*
  Curricular documents in Bulgarian language.

CROATIA

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Croatia - Reviews and Reports*
  OECD: ***Thematic reviews of national policies for education (p. 11-23)***
  Language: English, French, Croatian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Croatia - Reviews and Reports*
  Spajić-Vrkaš, Vedrana:
  Peace and human rights for Croatian primary schools - terminal report
  Language: English

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Hrvatska - Kurikulum - Hrvatski*
  Curriculum documents in Croatian language.

KOSOVO

- *Search under : SEE-ECN – Kosovo - Reviews and Reports*
  OECD: ***Thematic reviews of national policies for education (p. 15-27)***
  Language: English, French, Albanian, Serbian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Kosovo - Reviews and Reports*
  Pupovci, Dukagjin and Hyseni, Halim:
  Education policy in education for democratic citizenship and the management of diversity in South-East Europe: stocktaking research project country report: Kosovo
  Language: English

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Kosovo – Curriculum*
  The new Kosovo curriculum framework
  Language: English, Albanian, Serbian

MACEDONIA

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - FYR Macedonia - Reviews and Reports*
  Burg, Steven:
  Project on ethnic relations: state policies toward the Roma in Macedonia
  Language: English

MOLDOVA

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Moldova - National Policy Document*
  The concept of preschool educational system development in Moldova
  Language: English

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Moldova – Curriculum*
  Ministry of Education: ***Curriculum civic education***
  Language: English, Romanian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Moldova - Curriculum – Romana*
  Curriculum documents in Romanian language

MONTENEGRO

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Montenegro - Reviews and Reports*
  OECD: ***Thematic reviews of national policies for education*** **(p. 17-34)**
  Language: English, French, Serbian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Montenegro - Reviews and Reports*
  Education policy in education for democratic citizenship and the management of diversity in South-East Europe: stocktaking research project country report: Montenegro
  Language: English
- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Montenegro – Curriculum*
  The Ministry of Education: ***The curriculum: primary schools***
  Language: English, Serbian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Montenegro - Curriculum*
  Textbooks in Montenegro: ***Current use, immediate needs and future policy options***
  Language: English, Serbian

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- *Search under: SEE ECN - Miscellany - Theory and Expertise*
  Peković, Zoran and Zeković, Uroš:
  The present state and the reform of the education system of Montenegro
  Language: English

ROMANIA

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Romania – Curriculum*
  School development in Roma communities. Teachers guide. 2000-2001 Ed.
  Language: English

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Romania - Theory and Expertise*
  Crisan, Alexandru & Dvorski, Monica:
  What kind of models to implement change in education?
  The project "EDUCATION 2000+" of the Center Education 2000+ Romania
  Language: English

- *Search under: Romania - Curriculum – Romana*
  Curriculum documents in Romanian language.

SERBIA

- *Search under: SEE-ECN – Serbia - National Policy Documents*
  Report of the expert group on quality assurance: assessment and evaluation
  Language: English , Serbian
  Report of the expert group on pre-school education: early childhood education reform in Serbia
  Language: English, Serbian
  Report of the expert group on democratization: democratization of education and education for democratic citizenship
  Language: English, Serbian
  Report of the expert group on decentralization: decentralization of education in Serbia
  Language: English, Serbian
  Report of the expert group on teacher education: teacher education and professional development: suggested changes (2002-2005)
  Language: English, Serbian

- *Search under: SEE-ECN - Serbia - Expertise and theory*
  Ivan, Ivić:
  Possibilities and limitations of education in promotion of peace, democracy and tolerance
  Language: English

3. OTHER CURRICULAR DOCUMENTS ON THE INTERNET

- *Search under: EURYDICE*
  Eurydice Publication: ***A decade of reforms at compulsory education level in the European Union (1984-94)***
  Reforms at compulsory education level: 1984-94-Part 1-Curriculum
  Language: English
- *Search under: EURYDICE*
  Eurydice Publication: ***Pre-school and primary education in the European Union: pre- school education***
  Primary education
  Language: English
  A. Educational programmes and their content: (part 1, part 2, part 3, part 4)
  B. Assessment, promotion, and certification
  Language: English

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Annex 2: Agenda

Phase 1: November 2001 - March 2002
- collecting background materials;
- sample curricula;
- best practice;
- selective translation into South Slavic languages, Albanian, Romanian;
- materials available from the SEE ECN website: www.see-educoop.net

Phase 2: April 2002: country teams study background materials at home
- virtual communication between country teams and facilitators;
- analysis of expectations (CEPS).

Phase 3: Conference, 26-28 April
Languages: English and South Slavic

Friday, 26 April 2002
Arrival of participants in Slovenia, transport to Bohinj (shuttle at the airport)

17:00 Arrival of participants at the hotel, registration
Meeting of moderators and presenters

19:00 Welcome to participants

20:00 Dinner

Saturday, 27 April

Note on translation: Simultaneous interpretation for all languages available only at plenary sessions. Consecutive interpretation available at the working groups.

09:00 **Session I – Plenary**: **Curricular Renewal Processes: how to undertake them and why?**
Moderators: Mr. Sobhi Tawil (IBE), Mr. Pavel Zgaga (CEPS)
Plenary Case Studies: Mr. S. Gaber, Slovenia (Process of designing and approving)
Mr. A. Thorbjornsen, Norway (Implementation of curricula & evaluation)
Mr. N. Frayha, Lebanon (The role of education for social cohesion in a divided society)

10:30 Coffee/tea break

11:00 **Session II – Workshops: From Curriculum Design to Evaluation**
In smaller groups, participants will have an opportunity to exchange experiences, address issues focusing on specific areas/aspects of drafting curricula and to discuss concrete questions/cases. Participants choose one of the three sessions. Country teams divide up so as to cover all topics.

Group A **Designing and approving new curricula** Moderators: *Ms. Andreja Barle, Slovenia* *Mr. Peter Rado, Hungary*	**Group B** **Curriculum, quality and evaluation** Moderators: *Mr. Arild Thorbjornsen, Norway* *Mr. Helmut Bachman, Austria*

13:00 Lunch

14:30 **Session III – Workshops: Curricular areas in primary education: how to approach them?**

Group C **Social sciences** Moderators: *Mr. Nemer Frayha, Lebanon* *Mr. Janez Krek, Slovenia*	Group D **Mathematics** Moderators: *Mr. Brian Hudson, UK* *Mr. Zlatan Magajna, Slovenia*	Group E **Literacy and Language Policies** Moderators: *Mr. Piet van de Craen, Belgium* *Mr. Igor Saksida, Slovenia*

Note: Two short case studies in each group.
16:00 Coffee/tea break

16:30 Continuation of workshops

18:00 Completion of Day 1

20:00 Reception

Sunday, 28 April

09:00 **Session IV – Workshops: Perspectives in Curricular Renewal**
In smaller groups, participants will have an opportunity to exchange experiences and address issues on specific aspects of drafting curricula. Participants choose one of the three sessions. Country teams divide up so as to cover all three topics.

Group F **Teachers' Education** Moderators: *Mr. Laurence Walker, Canada* *Mr. Pavel Zgaga, Slovenia*	Group G **Minorities and Curriculum** Moderators: *Ms. Maria Andruszkiewicz, UK* *Mr. Peter Rado, Hungary*	Group H **Early Childhood** Moderators: *Ms. Ljubica Marjanovič Umek, Slovenia* *Ms. Arjana Miljak, Croatia*

10:30 Coffee/tea break

11:00 Continuation of workshops

13:00 Lunch

14:00 **Country Teams meet to draw conclusions, outstanding issues**

15:00 **Session V - Wrap-up Plenary**
Moderators: Dr. Cecilia Braslavsky, IBE and Dr. Pavel Zgaga, CEPS

A representative of each country team will give a brief report on drafting new curricula.
Presenters and facilitators may provide observations. Follow-up will be discussed.

16:45 Participants provide written evaluation

17:00 Closing

20:00 Dinner

Monday, 29 April

Transport to the airport, departure of participants.

ANNEX 3: List of participants

ALBANIA

- **Sotir Rapo**
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